

DisabilityNOW

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Standard talks hit by walk-out

Mental health campaigners have pulled out of helping the Government develop national service standards in protest at plans for the future care of mentally ill people.

The members of the United Kingdom Advocacy Network (UKAN) quit working on the National Service Framework for Mental Health after calling the proposals heavy handed.

In *Modernising Mental Health Services*, a strategy announced in December, Health Secretary Frank Dobson outlined plans which include 24-hour assertive outreach teams and more secure places.

Mr Dobson also confirmed he wants to see more compulsory administration of medicine.

Ethna Kilduff, co-chair of UKAN, said: "In one breath the Government condemns the stigma of mental illness and in the next breath their policy banders to damaging popular

prejudice. Their proposals will shatter existing partnerships."

Mind chief executive Judi Clements was also opposed to compulsory medication, and is worried about the outreach teams. "We don't want snatch squads," she said.

Meanwhile, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation says plans in the Government's white paper *Modernising Social Services* will not provide consistent nationwide home care without more guaranteed funding.

The paper promises eight regional commissions for care standards to regulate services. And a scheme which lets disabled people buy their own care is to extend to the over-65s.



Fare driver: Edinburgh driver Gary Grant (above left) won the first ever Edinburgh Disabled Person's Taxi Driver of the Year Award in a ceremony marking the International Day of Disabled People. He topped a poll run by local disability group Ecas. Gary, who was praised for his kindness, is pictured with Bruce Fairington, one of his nominators, and local tv personality Margo Macdonald. See page 5.

Give us fizz

Over 90 per cent of respondents to a DN survey want more physiotherapy for adults on the NHS. Nearly 60 per cent want it prioritised over other services.

Many respondents to a survey run in DN September and October felt they were missing out because of the shortage in physiotherapy provision.

As many as 96 per cent said they were not getting the physiotherapy they need, such as regular chest, hydro and lower limb treatments.

Worse still, over 88 per cent thought their health had deteriorated as a result.

Some found their GPs and other medical professionals unhelpful: over 40 per cent said doctors had not provided advice or referred them on.

Margot Sinclair from Edinburgh cares for her hus-



Gutch: treatment hard to access

band Peter, who has a neurological disorder. She told DN: "The therapists seem to think it is a waste of time as his condition is so variable. But he can always walk in the parallel bars and I need him to be able to

stand up if I am to look after him at home."

A spokeswoman for the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, said: "Clearly rehabilitation needs to be much higher up the Government health agenda, and a radical improvement in the quality and range of rehabilitation services must be a priority."

Richard Gutch, chief executive of Arthritis Care, said: "People with arthritis often need regular physiotherapy treatment, but often find it difficult or impossible to access. Arthritis Care supports any initiative to give this valuable service higher priority."

More power to fight for rights

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) could enforce rights beyond current laws and stop discrimination by small firms.

The Bill for the DRC, introduced last month, may allow the DRC to enforce parts of the new Human Rights Act, in addition to its more widely anticipated role of enforcing

the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Brian Lamb, head of public affairs at Scope, thought the DRC would push strongly for firms of less than 15 staff to be covered by the DDA's employment section.

The DRC will also have a power of creating legally binding agreements to stop people

discriminating – a power other rights bodies which focus on race and gender do not have.

But disability groups think £25m funding over three years is too low to do the job.

Mr Lamb said: "Because it faces a massive task in tackling business concern and public ignorance we are not convinced this will be enough."

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Standards sought on ms

Neurologists are calling for national guidelines on ms provision, after a survey found that nearly half of all health authorities don't set aside money for treating the condition.

In addition to the survey by the Association for Quality in Health Care, research by the MS Society shows that one in

three people with ms have their health care managed by a GP, not a neurologist. Many miss out on specialist care when they have pain.

The MS Society has prepared a petition which has been signed by 15 neurologists, calling on the Government to set national service standards.

Professor Lance Blumhardt, a neurologist at Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham, has signed the petition. He said some of his patients would be eligible for the Beta-interferon treatment but could not have it because the health authority had not allocated money. He said: "It is frustrating for

patients, because they see what's happening elsewhere."

Chair of the All-Party MS Group Robin Corbett MP said he wanted the Government to include ms on the agenda of its new National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

See news focus p13.



Timms: hopes to end BIP soon

April end for fraud check-up

The anti-fraud Benefits Integrity Project (BIP) is likely to continue now until April, MPs were told last month.

Social Security Minister Stephen Timms, was asked by members of the House of Commons Social Security Committee why his department was not stopping BIP at once, having said it would be ending.

He said ministers had not decided yet what to put in its place and would consult with the Disability Rights Forum on the matter. So the project was now likely to continue for the next four months, although he "hoped" it would end sooner.

The Committee suggested he should visit people being "bipped" to see how interviews are carried out.

Hyundai have done it again. Or at least that's what the motoring press would have us believe.

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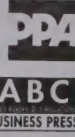
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Disabled OAPs miss out perks

Elderly disabled people could be losing out on tax breaks and services they need from the taxman, a new survey has shown.

There is little publicity about leaflets being available in Braille, large print or audio cassette, while the tape and Braille versions of the leaflet most relevant to elderly people does not cover Blind Person's Allowance.

The survey, *Older people on low incomes**, carried out by the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group (LITRG), also found

that tax centres may fail elderly deaf people.

One large enquiry centre had disconnected its textphone because of staff shortages. And a common leaflet sent to pensioners does not mention that officials can make home visits.

John Andrews, LITRG chairman, said: "We want the Inland Revenue to publicise what they do. A lot of the people who might benefit are quite poor."

*£5. Tel: 0171-235 9381.

Car row erupts

Three major manufacturers are refusing to join Motability's controversial contract hire scheme, *DN* has learned.

The new scheme is due to go live in March, and although 19 manufacturers, including Vauxhall, signed up by the November deadline, Ford, Peugeot and Rover did not. They fear the second-hand market will slump if Motability Finance Ltd (MFL), the finance firm behind Motability, sells on 140,000 cars a year. They also fear MFL will have a monopoly.

Nick Thenistocleus, Ford's fleet marketing manager,

claimed a new independent report shows the scheme would increase operating costs by "multi-millions". These would be met by customers and manufacturers, he said.

Motability turned down his suggestion to defer the scheme.

He confirmed that if Ford did not rejoin Motability it would look at starting a rival scheme.

Noel Muddiman, director of Motability, argued that the new scheme is good for disabled people, with flexible mileage and servicing and gains at sell-back time. The independent report did not show extra costs,



Campbell: rival scheme useful

he said, and the consultants had miscalculated. Reports of a monopoly were "garbage".

But the Disabled Drivers' Association's Douglas Campbell said a rival scheme might help drivers "see if MFL gives a good deal".

Shop cop dropped

A former policeman turned sign language interpreter who raised concerns about the way one force he works for interviews deaf people has been laid off by that force.

Malcolm Pyle from Middlesbrough was removed from Northumbria Police's list of interpreters in November after he told officers he did not believe they were sticking to rules set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE).

He said he had interpreted in interviews when officers had failed to write down the questions they asked and the answers which the interpreter

spoke back. This is a safeguard built into the code of practice for the act in a bid to ensure that a deaf person knows questions and answers have been interpreted correctly.

Mr Pyle said: "I do not want to see the guilty go free or the innocent get convicted. If you do not observe the rules there is more chance of a mistake."

A spokeswoman for the police force said: "We are confident we adhere rigidly to all relevant legislation including PACE."

She claimed any mistakes would be picked up in court.

But Steven Conlon, a member of the Deaf Legal Access Group



Pyle: concerned over safeguards

and himself a sign language interpreter, said the case highlighted his group's concerns. "There is no national standard in the way police interview deaf people," he said.

He suggested videoing interviews might help.

No easy way to jobs after losing benefit

Under a quarter of people forced off Incapacity Benefit (IB) find work, a Government report shows, casting doubt on moves to get such people a job.

About 120,000 who have been claiming the benefit lose it after their 28-week medical test each year. Only 23 per cent of them find work.

The figures are even worse for people who fail in their appeals over loss of IB: only 16 per cent of them get a job.

The revelations are the result of research by the Policy Studies Institute for the

Government, and cast doubt on the effectiveness of Government plans like the New Deal.

Richard Wood, co-chair of the Disability Benefits Consortium, said those leaving benefits often faced barriers to finding work by being denied access to transport, education and training, and because most employers were still not covered by the Disability Discrimination Act.

But he added: "The key issue the Government should address is retention in work. They must stop the vast number of disabled people losing work."

In brief

Insurance for all

Scope has launched insurance schemes for pets, travel, retail, cars and homes through the insurance brokers MCIS. Scope Select includes special cover for disabled aids and equipment.

For details, tel: 0121-233 2722.

MP Bucks up

North Westminster MP Karen Buck joined the fight to save Alison House, a respite care home (see *DN*, November).

Homes fit to live in

The Government should review housing rules and press for more co-operation between housing, social and health services, says a new report published by Scope in December.

The report, *More Scope for Fair Housing**, includes a guide with examples of good practice where disabled people were allocated suitable housing.

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MOBILITY MATTERS NETWORK

Benefits uprating

Main benefits	Now (£/week)	April '99 (£/week)
Attendance Allowance		
Higher	51.30	52.95
Lower	34.30	35.40
Child benefit		
First child	11.45	14.40
Each other child	9.30	9.60
Disability Living Allowance		
Care component:		
Higher	51.30	52.95
Middle	34.30	35.40
Lower	13.60	14.05
Mobility component:		
Higher	35.85	37.00
Lower	13.60	14.05
Disability Working Allowance		
Single adults	50.75	51.80
Couples/lone parents	79.40	81.05
Applicable amount (ie taper threshold):		
Single adults	59.25	60.50
Couples/lone parents	79.00	80.65
Family Credit		
Adult	48.80	49.80
Applicable amount (threshold)	79.00	80.65
Severe Disablement Allowance		
Basic rate	39.10	40.35
Age-related addition:		
Higher	13.60	14.05
Middle	8.60	8.90
Lower	4.30	4.45
Invalid Care Allowance	38.70	39.95
Incapacity Benefit		
Long term	64.70	66.75
Short term (under pension age)		
Lower	48.80	50.35
Higher	57.70	59.55
Short term (over pension age)		
Lower	62.05	64.05
Higher	64.70	66.75
Retirement Pension (A & B)	64.70	66.75
Statutory sick pay		
Earnings threshold	64.00	66.00
Standard	57.70	59.55
War Disablement Pension (100%)		
Private or equivalent	111.10	114.70
Industrial Disablement Pension		
Over 18 (20% disability)	20.94	21.62
Under 18 (20% disability)	12.83	13.24
Over 18 (100% disability)	104.70	108.10
Under 18 (100% disability)	64.15	66.20
Widow's pension	64.70	66.75
INCOME SUPPORT		
Residential care homes		
Very dependent elderly	247.00	252.00
Physical disablement:		
Under pension age	292.00	298.00
Over pension age	213.00	218.00
Mental handicap	257.00	262.00
Max Greater London increase	44.00	45.00
Nursing homes		
Physical disablement:		
Under pension age	359.00	367.00
Over pension age	318.00	325.00
Mental handicap	325.00	332.00
Terminal illness	318.00	325.00
Max Greater London increase	49.00	50.00
Personal allowances		
Single, under 18 usual rate	30.30	30.95
Single, under 18 higher rate	39.85	40.70
Single, 18-24	39.85	40.70
Single, 25 or over	50.35	51.40
Couple, both under 18	60.10	61.35
Couple, one or both over 18	79.00	80.65

THANKS TO PAULINE THOMPSON OF THE DISABLEMENT INCOME GROUP

Act won't alter

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is unlikely to be updated within the lifetime of the current Parliament, Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge has admitted. Just days before the establishment of a Disability Rights Commission, Ms Hodge told a group of representatives from Action for Dysphasic Adults (ADA) that, while she recognised the need for better awareness of the condition, she saw little prospect of amending the act before the next election.

The Commission, which will be given a budget of £3m in its first year, will have as one of its prime roles the review of the DDA. It will also work towards eliminating discrimination, and act as a conciliation service between goods and service providers and customers.

Quiet care

Around 200 million hours of voluntary care each year are being worked by relatives of people who have had strokes, the Stroke Association claims in a new report. The association says such hidden help can put great strain on the carers, who often develop depression. Meanwhile, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey called on the government to show "immense caution and sympathy" in dealing with carers. He feared that, under the



Margaret Hodge talks to ADA boss Ruth Coles, watched by staff
SHELAGH COLLINGWOOD

Government's welfare review, "some carers could lose out."

stop taking it suddenly, as this could cause adverse side effects.

Milestone

Motability celebrated its 21st anniversary and one millionth lease vehicle as Princess Alexandra handed over car keys to six new customers.

The Millennium Commission awarded over £2m to the "Give it a Go" scheme run by Scope, NICOD in Northern Ireland and Capability Scotland. The money will help 525 disabled individuals realise their potential in community projects.

Drug drop

Tasmar, which is used by thousands of people with Parkinson's disease, was removed from sale by the Department of Health following the deaths of three people who died after taking it. However people already using the drug were advised not to

Kids win

Two children disabled by hospital treatments won substantial damages last month. Helen Edwards, a 17-year-old who was left blind and unable to eat or talk when she was five, when an operation to remove a birthmark went wrong, was awarded £3.9m.

David Reynolds, a 12-year-old with cerebral palsy who was



One of the airport "Ambi-lifts"

born by forceps delivery, received £3m.

And lobbying by the father of a 12-year-old boy with one leg who had been selected to play for his local football team paid off after the Football Association waived a rule which would have prevented him from playing. The FA's rule said players must not wear anything that could injure themselves or others – and had initially said this applied to Sam Burrows' artificial leg.

Writer dies

Veteran travel writer Quentin Crewe, a wheelchair user for 40 years because of muscular dystrophy, died aged 72. He had worked on a wide range of publications, including *Vogue*, the *Times* and the *Sunday Telegraph*, and had written several books.

Meanwhile, prospects for tomorrow's disabled travellers have improved with new passenger carriers at Manchester, Gatwick and Stansted airports. The "Ambilift" can lift wheelchair users or those in stretchers – and their carers – into anything from a small propeller plane to a Boeing 747.

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DN1/99



Giving it some: disabled singer Totlyn Jackson wowing the audience at a London Disability Arts Forum event held to mark International Day of Disabled People. Other performers at the event included drummer Neville Murray, comedian Mike Lawson and poet Paulette Ng. The event was held at the newly accessible Half Moon Theatre in Stepney.

TESSA JOL

Disruption day

Disabled protestors put a stop to Government rhetoric when Social Security Minister Stephen Timms was invited to speak at Newham Council's International Day of Disabled People event.

Mr Timms was asked to speak about benefits and the New Deal yet was forced into silence when members of the women's disability group WinVisible and benefit reform campaigners Incapacity Action began protesting about disabled peoples' benefits cuts.

Claire Glasman, a member of WinVisible, said: "The Minister tried to plough on but we had a

megaphone. The Council said if we let him finish we could have a right of reply. Many disabled people then spoke about their experiences of cuts."

The minister was in Newham to launch the council's direct payments scheme.

In central London, the Minister for Disabled People, Margaret Hodge encouraged disability groups by insisting that Britain must take the lead on European disability issues. She said: "Equal opportunities in Europe is still seen as a gender issue."

She was attending a UK Disability Forum for Europe

exhibition where she announced improvements to the renamed DDA Helpline.

Also in London, disability sport was given a boost by the announcement that pop star Melanie Chisholm, alias Sporty Spice, has agreed to be patron of Disability Sport England's junior sports programme.

Meanwhile, disabled people in Leeds marked the day by launching the city's own centre for integrated living. The centre will offer a direct payments support service, housing advice, and training.

DDA Helpline: (0325) 622 633.

Bullied by council

A disabled woman had to leave a counselling course because she claims other students bullied her and tutors did nothing.

Marie Smith, from Barnsley, who is a wheelchair user, spent £400 on a Counselling and Training Sheffield (CATS) course in September 1997. Yet just before finishing it she left because of what she claims was "bullying" by other group members including Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) social services staff.

She said: "We had to make a video on the course. I said I felt sometimes people didn't know



Marie Smith: talking generally

how to communicate with me. I was talking generally, but when the video was shown, it was as if all hell broke loose. They said: 'How dare she say that?'. They took it personally.

From then on it was just a screaming match."

Mrs Smith is now taking the case through the small claims court to get her money back.

CATS denied her claims, alleging it offered her support.

But others are also unhappy with Doncaster MBC staff. In a local Scope survey last year, 19 out of 20 disability groups said service was poor. Doncaster Scope's Alison Lester said: "Many of us have come across staff with no idea how to deal with disabled people."

Doncaster MBC was unable to comment.

Huge payment for care delay

Compensation of £15,000 could be awarded to a disabled girl after a Government watchdog found Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council failed to provide care for her for over two years.

The award is one of the highest ever recommended by the local government ombudsman.

The girl, who has severe learning difficulties, was assessed by a social worker in January 1995 but did not receive day care until February 1997. In her report, ombudsman Patricia Thomas said: "I consider six months to be the maximum time needed from assessment to providing care."

Meanwhile, the London Borough of Hackney is likely to pay out £1,500 after the ombudsman found it made a series of errors in providing

appropriate care for two brothers with learning difficulties.

The two men attended a centre for people with physical disabilities from 1995, and were meant to have their needs reassessed during the first six months. But their reassessment did not begin until 1997.

Both councils were considering the recommendations as DN went to press.

But Hackney officers have already advised councillors to accept their verdict. A council spokesperson told DN it had already begun to implement changes to the training, management structure and supervision of staff looking after people with learning difficulties.

A Calderdale spokesperson said: "We take this seriously. We want all the information before a decision is made."

In brief

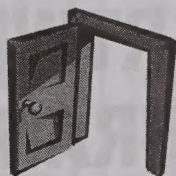
Don't get bugged

The much-hyped Millennium Bug – or computers' alleged inability to cope with the year 2000 – is unlikely to cause much trouble for disabled people, DN has learned. Mark Prouse, information superhighway project manager for the Royal National Institute for the Blind, took part in a Government survey on the issue. Last month he said specialist equipment, such as speech synthesisers, was "unlikely to have any problems".

Funds not focussed

Disabled people's experiences are not sufficiently considered in the setting up and running of Europe-funded schemes aimed at helping them find work, a conference heard last month.

The conference, which looked at the EU-funded community initiative Employment-Horizon, also heard that there needed to be more effective checks on which projects work.



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DOWN'S SYNDROME

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Magpie in flap

A disabled football fan has accused his club of discrimination because it won't give him a season ticket.

Leslie Willans is trying to get funding to take action against Newcastle United under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Up to 91 per cent of the club's general spaces are sold as season tickets. But only two thirds of the wheelchair spaces are. So Mr Willans, who doesn't have a season ticket, has to ring up before each match to get a ticket. "I am no less a fan than the next person," he said.

Andrew Price, director of legal affairs at the club, said demand has outstripped supply. He added: "We are happy to have a survey of wheelchair-



Lone fighter: Mr Willans admits he has never failed to see a match

using fans. We try to be fair to them so they can attend for the season or just a few matches."

But Andy Cope, a solicitor with Gateshead Law Centre,

which has taken up Mr Willans' case, said: "The point is that they are treating wheelchair users differently and in a discriminatory way."

Euro rights threat

Campaigners have criticised a proposed law from Europe which they claim could prevent disabled groups from copying materials into accessible forms.

The threat comes from the proposed EU Directive on Copyright and Related Rights in the Information Society, which may be in force by 2002.

The UK branch of the European Fair Practices in Copyright Campaign (EFPICC-UK) said the rights of people with a learning disability to

record something to help them learn at their own pace was under threat, along with the right to convert text into Braille, or into material suitable for deaf people.

It wants guarantees that this type of copying can continue, and that disability organisations will not be prevented from converting material or have to pay extra.

David Mann, campaigns officer with the Royal National Institute for the Blind, said:

"We want a directive that says that member states must make provision for disabled people."

But Maureen Duffy, chair of the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA), which looks after rights owners' interests, insisted: "We should not be frightened by the directive."

The CLA thinks a system of voluntarily waiving the copyright for disabled people is the best way forward. It has set up a working group to see how this would work in practice.

Emphatic rejection of Swiss drugs plan

A radical Swiss drugs initiative which would have made it easier for disabled people to get cannabis has been defeated.

Had "Droleg" been passed in the referendum last November, the Swiss would have been able to use small amounts of drugs including cannabis, heroin and cocaine legally.

The government had urged voters to reject the proposal, and over 73 per cent did. Under the proposal, drugs

would have been taxed and the money used to fund drug addiction programmes.

But health campaigners, the police and the church also opposed "Droleg" because of health risks and concerns that it would lead to an increase in drug trafficking in the country.

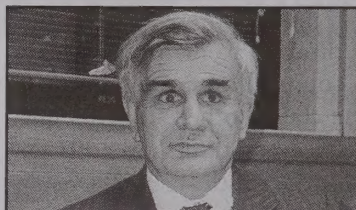
The government has promised to review its policy on cannabis later this year.

See news focus, page 10.

More detail on wireless plans

The British Wireless for the Blind Fund (BWBF) has set up a working group to establish which partially sighted people should be entitled to free equipment such as radios and digital televisions from the charity.

Plans launched in November led to confusion among some visually impaired people who were uncertain whether they will be entitled to free radios. Martin Rogers from Carlisle telephoned BWBF on behalf of his wife Lorraine who is registered partially sighted. He said: "They had no firm proposals on who they will help and what they will provide." He asked



Wall: no question of means-test

for a BWBF brochure, which he found "posh" with little detail.

The working party will publish what the criteria of need should be in March. But BWBF chairman John Wall said the scheme would not be means-tested. "We are definitely going ahead with helping partially sighted people," he added.



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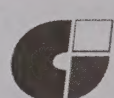
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In brief

No advice for women

Sixty-five per cent of pregnant woman with chronic fatigue syndrome (ME) had no special advice from midwives or doctors, a new survey by Action for ME has shown. Action for ME is now calling for medical professionals to have more training so they can support mothers with ME.

All change at the top

Diana Whitworth is to become the new chief executive at the Carers National Association (CNA). Ms Whitworth moves to the job from the National Consumer Council, where she has worked as the head of public affairs for seven years. She will be taking up the CNA post in March.

Meanwhile Brian Baldock, a non-executive director of Marks and Spencer and a former deputy chairman of Guinness, becomes chairman of Mencap. He takes over from Lord Rix.

IT comes to South-east



Andrew Tarbard tries his one-handed keyboard at the new centre

Help is on the way for disabled people in the South-East who need computer adaptations, thanks to a new AbilityNet centre in Berkshire.

Like the four existing AbilityNet centres, staff at the centre will be able to advise individuals and companies on what new equipment they will need. Last year the organisation helped 600 people.

AbilityNet's chairman David Livermore said: "Our leverage is unbelievable. Each assessment costs us £230. Yet the cost to the state would be £160,000 if the person concerned was left

on benefits. Last year we kept 30 people employed, so we saved £5m in public money."

The centre will be based for at least the next three years at Microsoft offices in Reading.

One man who has benefited from AbilityNet is amputee Andrew Tarbard. He was having to write with his mouth at work. AbilityNet trained him on a one-handed keyboard and voice recognition software. "We're having problems trying to make a mistake," he said.

AbilityNet Thames Valley, tel: (0870) 240 4455.

B&Q eases DIY

B&Q has opened a new "blue-print" store in Norwich selling goods specially suited to disabled people. The DIY chain's entire workforce is also to get disability equality training.

The store is selling around 70 products carrying a new "Daily Living Made Easier" logo, only some of which were already sold by B&Q. They range from long-handled gardening tools to kitchens and bathrooms which can be designed and fitted to disabled people's needs.

Following advice from disability consultants Churchill & Friend, the store has electric scooters, while members of staff can wear aprons fitted with induction loops. There are monitored disabled parking bays with spoken warnings. There are information videos with sign language, and all customer literature comes in alternative formats.

Kay Allen, B&Q's diversity manager, said that depending on recommendations to be made this month, all 19 new stores opening next year will meet the Norwich store's standards. Up to 280 existing stores will also be refitted. "There should be no reason why we



B&Q it : the Disabled Living Centres Council's director Chris Stott admires basins (top). A staff member helps a deaf customer (above)

cannot do anything to an existing store that we have not done in Norwich," she said.

Susan Scott-Parker, chief executive of the Employer's Forum

on disability, said: "B&Q has gone the extra mile with this. I cannot imagine anyone could have expected a company like this to do much more."

'User-led' groups get praised

A writing group and a round-the-clock social group were this year's winners of a Department of Health (DoH) award for voluntary groups helping people with mental health problems.

The Friends of St Clements Hospital writing group and the Feltham Open Door Project, both in London, won the award at the Mental Health Awards for their user-led approach.

Steven Gordon, tutor at St Clements, said the group was

set up to be educational. He said: "The idea was to bring learning into the hospital. We hoped it would be therapeutic."

Feltham Open Door is open seven days a week including evenings to help people when they might feel isolated. User Peter Comley said: "I was recommended to come by my consultant. At first I didn't want to. But now I enjoy it."

Other winners in the Mental Health Awards included



Peter Comley likes Feltham now

Sheffield's Pitsmoor Surgery, which was praised for going out into the community, while providing in-house services.

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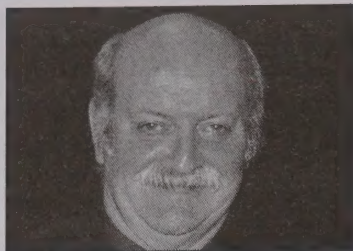
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Charity bashed

An awards bash highlighting good services for deaf people was marred when one winner criticised the charity running it.

Jerry Hanifin, a sign language presenter for Chase Videos, which won a Hear for All Award from the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), said the charity did not represent the 70,000 users of British Sign Language (BSL).

And he later told DN: "The RNID gets money for the



Hanifin: small groups miss out

whole of the hearing impaired community. Because it has the money, grass roots organisations like ours do not. What's

better: something like this event or the work we can do?"

But RNID chief executive James Strachan said: "These awards are called Hear for All, and the RNID is here for all the 8.7 million deaf and hard of hearing people in this country."

Chase Videos took the award for the best organisation with less than 20 staff. Barclays Bank West Midlands Region won the award for best organisation employing over 20 people.

Soap 'best and worst'

The tv soap *Eastenders* won both worst and best soap awards in the 1998 Raspberry Ripple Awards.

The programme provoked outrage after Bianca and Ricky Butcher decided to terminate their unborn baby because it was disabled. Susie Burrows, one of the judges, said: "One of the writers thought our comments were so powerful the BBC could not answer them."

The soap came top after a more positive recent plot-line, which saw Bianca refuse a scan for her second pregnancy, because, she said: "I want my baby however she is."

The awards are given to film, television and theatre organisa-



Disabled actors in *The Unknown Soldier*, which won best tv drama

tions that portray disabled people as ordinary human beings.

Curiously, the best film was *Live Flesh*, where a spinally injured man has a relationship

with the heroine – but then loses her to a non-disabled person. Ms Burrows said: "This always happens – disabled people lose the relationship."

Breaks 'are overlooked'

Short-term respite care breaks are still the "Cinderella service in social services provision".

So said Vicky Jones, national co-ordinator of Shared Care UK, at the relaunch of the charity as Shared Care Network.

She said this is something the new-look charity, an umbrella organisation of care schemes, is keen to change.

Junior health minister John Hutton said the Government would help with its initiatives like the National Carers Strategy and the Quality Protects Initiative. The latter impels councils to set out by

the end of this month how they intend to develop children's services. The Government has put £375m over the next three years into the initiative.

Mr Hutton said: "Short-term family breaks are of huge practical help not only to the child but to their family as well."

But Matt Bukowski, Lincolnshire County Council social services director, told the charity that it needed to be clear about how to work with social services if it was to get more funding. "Short-term care should be part of a network of care," he said.

Harassment panel fails at first hurdle

A panel set up by a London borough to investigate disability harassment acted unfairly in its first ever meeting, a government watchdog has ruled.

The ombudsman has advised the London Borough of Sutton to pay a local woman £1,000 in compensation after it sought to take an injunction out against her after the meeting.

The meeting had been called following allegations of har-

assment put forward by an advocate of the woman's neighbour, who has a disabled son. The ombudsman concluded that the meeting had been carried out unfairly because the advocate, who is also chair of a local disability group, had been allowed to sit in on it while the panel made its decision.

Sutton's housing and social services committee will consider the report later this month.

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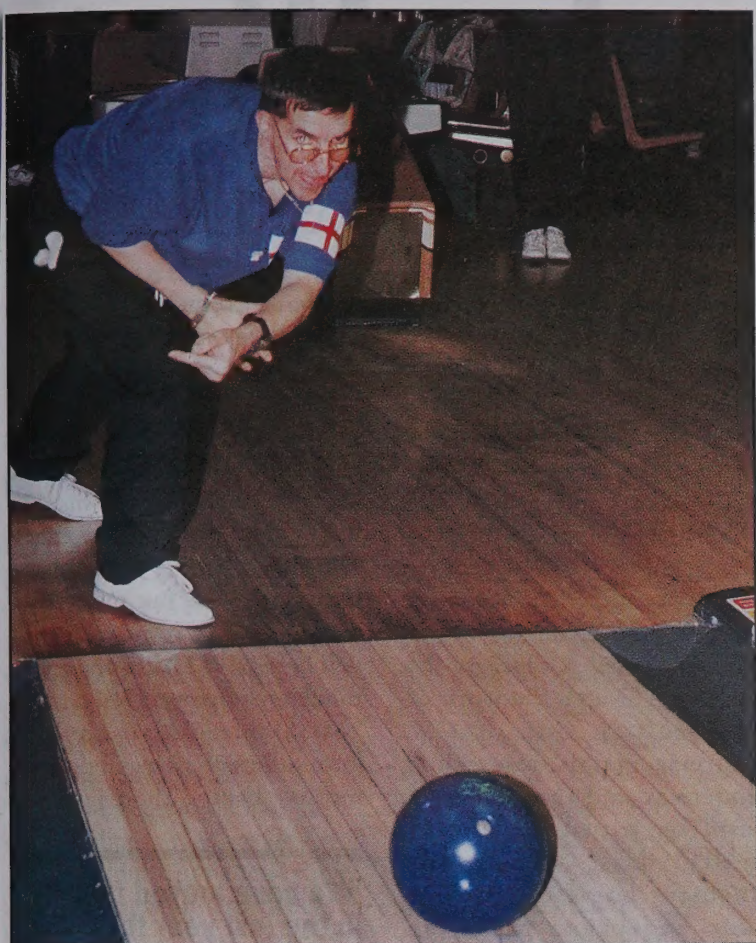
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Bowled over: England's Nigel Halliday helping his team to come top with 21 medals in the first ever Special Olympics European Ten-Pin Bowling Tournament in Scunthorpe. Wales came second with ten medals, while honorary Europeans Kazakhstan won nine.

Records aid Scotch win

James Anderson powered his way to three world swimming records at the BT National Short Course Swimming Championships, in Darlington in November.

Anderson, of Broxburn in Scotland, had already topped the medals table at the World Championships in New Zealand earlier in October.

But he kept up the winning performances in Darlington by setting new world times in his category for the 100m freestyle, the 100m backstroke and the 50m freestyle.

He told DN: "I had only been back from New Zealand for two weeks, and I was tired, so I was surprised to do so well in the Nationals."

Vicki Broadribb, from Alton in Hampshire, took world records in her category for both the 50m breaststroke and the 50m freestyle.

But Scotland took the honours in the team accumulative score with 551 points. It was helped along not just by Anderson but also from other world records set by Margaret McElen, of Greenock, Iain Gowans of Glasgow, Kenny Cairns of Erskine, and Paul Johnston of Kennoway.

East Midlands came second with 338 points. In total 16

world and three European records fell during the championships, which boasted over 200 disabled swimmers.

No going Dutch in Masters

Host nation the Netherlands swept the board at the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters in Eindhoven in November, winning both the men's and the women's finals.

Star of the show was 17-year-old Esther Verger, who on her debut in the invitation-only tournament beat fellow Dutch woman Maaïke Smit in the women's final.

The world No 2's aggressive play, in particular her powerful use of topspin from the back of the court, saw her win the first set 6-0. The second set was more of a nailbiter, as it went to a tie-break, which Ms Verger eventually won 8-6.

Her victory was all the more surprising, because, unlike Smit, she had dropped a set in her semi-final.

The men's final eventually saw current International Tennis Federation champion Ricky Moller make use of his great power and technical skill to beat France's Laurent Giamartini 7-5, 7-5.

Because only the top eight players are invited to the tournament, there was no British interest. Britain's best men's player, Jayant Mistry, is ranked 11th, while Kimberley Dell is the highest-ranking women's player at No 17.

Team talk

Tanni Grey

A winter of split content



Why do we have winter? As a disabled person this is the time of year I hate. It's freezing cold when I am pushing on my wheelchair, and snow, slush or even ice just gets stuck to it.

As an athlete, however, I can't wait for this time. This is when all the real work is done.

In October I have my two weeks rest. Like most athletes I love the first week and am miserable and missing training during the second. So it's good to be back on the go again.

It's also the panic time. While I should be building my training, lifting weights and getting stronger and fitter, I panic that there are only three months until my first race.

I wonder if now is really the best time to change the pushing technique I have used for the past ten years. But then all the plans I have to try out these new techniques (which I am convinced will take minutes off my marathon personal best) disappear as I go back to the

techniques that have worked in the past.

I used to think this kind of apprehension was just me. But this year I discovered this is the way most athletes feel. It proves what an odd bunch we are.

So for those reasons I have a split personality at this time.

But this is also when I really get to put something back. I'm talking about school awards presentation time, and I love it. Going into schools as a "celebrity" is an honour. It brings me back to what sport should be: promoting fun and personal achievement, and if excellence comes out of it, that's a bonus.

If I need any motivation to train, then this is where I get it. Just one person saying they have seen me race (a good or a bad one, it doesn't matter) makes it all worthwhile.

So all I have to do now is pray for no rain until February. I knew there was something I should have asked Santa for.

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The pot is boiling

Britain takes the lead with its research into the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes, Lisa Hitchen discovers

"You are light years ahead of America," US cannabis experts told UK doctors at the National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws Conference in Washington DC last winter.

There are many reasons the UK is in the lead. An onslaught of activity from medical experts, politicians and drug activists has helped to chip away at the Government's hard-line position. As a result the argument has now changed from whether this drug should be available to how it can be.

"How" is the place the Americans have yet to get to. For a confusion of federal versus state law has created a battleground of legal machinations and criminal persecutions. On an emotional level it has created intense worry for a lot of people.

Dr Tod Mikuriya, medical co-ordinator to California's cannabis centres, told DN of his frustration with the 60-year old US stranglehold on further research. He said: "Since cannabis was taken off the market, the information concerning it has been deleted, denied or distorted."

On a more positive note, referendums held in Alaska, Oregon, Washington and Nevada last November resulted in majority votes for the medic-

inal use of cannabis. The state of Arizona reaffirmed an initiative passed two years ago to allow cannabis to be used

medicinally. Dr Paul Consroe, of the University of Arizona, said: "This is a big advantage, because otherwise people

would be in jail."

Elsewhere changes are also happening. In Germany, the Government says it will consider the case for the legalisation of the possession of some drugs. In Greece meanwhile, the Government has closed down shops selling hemp products.

But only the UK is seriously looking into getting a quality cannabis-based product on the market. Through the work of Dr Geoffrey Guy of GW Pharmaceuticals, research is underway and the first tests involving patients begin this spring. Last month the company harvested its first crop and began preparing cannabis extracts.

Other studies are developing too, like those of Dr William Notcutt, although he admits it is the work of Dr Guy who has propelled things forward. He said: "We have moved further in the last year than I dared hope. Other countries have not thought it through. The UK has been pragmatic and the Government wants it to happen."

Over 600 people have agreed to take part in Dr Guy's trials, more than two-thirds of whom came through *Disability Now*.

They include people like Robert Banham, 45, who has used cannabis for 13 years for

multiple sclerosis (ms). Mr Banham, from Norfolk, said: "It stops my muscles twitching, helps me to sleep and it helps with bladder control."

But others have not seen benefits. John Major, 49, from Warwickshire, also has ms. He has used cannabis for three months. He said: "There have been no effects. But ms is slow acting so any improvements will be slow. If I hang on, something might happen."

Mr Major and Mr Banham have different views about the motives behind the trials. Mr

'We have moved further in the last year than I even dared hope'

Banham said: "Pharmaceutical companies push drugs to make money. What is the difference between them and a kid standing on a street corner selling an ounce of hash?"

Mr Major said: "I'm looking for a legal position to take natural cannabis."

Others also have concerns. Last November, British Judge Graham Boal warned against cannabis decriminalisation after a Thai-born man with paranoid schizophrenia was convicted of manslaughter after smoking the drug daily. But such instances won't be forgotten. Dr Guy said: "We know cannabis may exacerbate conditions like schizophrenia and possibly other conditions. This will come out in trials."

The aim of the work of GW Pharmaceuticals is to develop a "herbal preparation of consistent composition" ready for testing by the Medical Controls Agency (MCA) and available on prescription.

In the US, national and state polls indicate Americans want the same with more than 60 per cent in favour of medicinal cannabis. Dr Guy is confident such votes will lead to a change in federal policy. Others are not sure. Dr Consroe said: "The federal government is so anti-drugs that it has no rational thought on this."

The UK situation could mean a brighter future for other countries. Both parliamentarians and doctors are aware of the implications: a product approved by the MCA could become a major industry.

But with clinical trials going on in the UK, it is disabled people in Britain who will reap the benefits first.



Raising hopes: Dr Guy examines *cannabis sativa* plants

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'She is not fazed at all'

Little Rosalind Clarke's resilience keeps on amazing her mum Elaine, who has found a rewarding career fighting for similar kids

My third child Rosalind was born without a left arm below the elbow in December 1990. Having already had two boys we had become quite blasé about childbirth, and had no reason to think there would be problems. So it was a shock. But time helps and every day she continues to amaze me.

We attend the prosthetic clinic at Westmore Southern General Hospital. She is checked every three months and a new electric hand is made if she has grown.

Her first cosmetic hand was made when she was three months old, but in 1993 she became the first child to be fitted with a "Scamp" hand, specially designed for very young children.

Her missing arm has had an impact on my life, too. Shortly after she was born we joined

Reach, the association for children with a hand or arm deficiency. A year later I joined its committee. At one meeting they said they had no publicity person, so I volunteered.

Since then I have been responsible for the production of a Reach video, which has been distributed to all UK maternity and prosthetic clinics, and is available to buy or hire from our head office.

I also organise our annual conference, and have helped improve it to become not just a meeting, but also a weekend of fun, activity, and lots more. These have really been exciting times for Reach.

The work has also brought changes in me. I recently changed jobs from being a nurse to become a medical rep for a drug company. My work



Elaine and Rosalind Clarke: Rosalind would rather keep her electric hand than have a hand transplant

with Reach has given me the confidence to talk to doctors. It has even made me get fit. I rashly agreed to run a half marathon for the charity, and now jog three times a week. Fortunately my boss does not mind about my Reach work. He even takes Reach-related phone messages for me.

But what about Rosalind? Well, this year she learned to swim and ride a bike. She proved me wrong yet again

when she went up a climbing wall, gripping the holds with her electric hand.

At school she wears her hand all the time, but when she is at home she only wears it when she needs to. At Reach meetings she doesn't wear it at all because she feels comfortable with all her friends who have similar conditions.

There was recent publicity about a hand transplant. She thought about such a

possibility very carefully and then told me she had decided that she liked her baby hand and would not be the same without it.

Rosalind really is the way she is. When the two of us recently appeared on a tv discussion programme she did most of the talking and even disagreed with me on air. She is just not fazed by her arm at all.

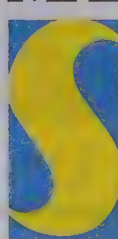
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ACCEPTANCE FEE	£85.00
CREDIT FACILITY FEE	£40.00
TOTAL CHARGE FOR CREDIT	£1,721.92
BALANCE PAYABLE	£7,590.92
TOTAL PAYABLE	£8,590.92

APR 13.5% / 1 payment x £85.00 / 48 monthly payments x £155.54

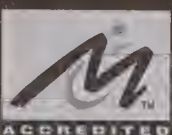
2.	
PRICE OF VEHICLE	£9,869.00
DEPOSIT REQUIRED	£4,000.00
BALANCE TO FINANCE	£5,869.00
CHARGES	
INTEREST	£1,596.92
ACCEPTANCE FEE	£85.00
CREDIT FACILITY FEE	£40.00
TOTAL CHARGE FOR CREDIT	£1,721.92
BALANCE PAYABLE	£7,590.92
TOTAL PAYABLE	£8,590.92

APR 13.5% / 1 payment x £85.00 / 48 monthly payments x £155.54

3.	
PRICE OF VEHICLE	£7,869.00
DEPOSIT REQUIRED	£2,000.00
BALANCE TO FINANCE	£5,869.00
CHARGES	
INTEREST	£1,596.92
ACCEPTANCE FEE	£85.00
CREDIT FACILITY FEE	£40.00
TOTAL CHARGE FOR CREDIT	£1,721.92
BALANCE PAYABLE	£7,590.92
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n o n s e n s e v e h i c l e c o n v e r s i o n s

An uncertain act to follow

Although the Human Rights Act could help these three people, its real impact is unclear, says Rod Hermeston

There was outrage in November when Pamela Phelps, a dyslexic woman, had a previous award of £45,000 for alleged negligence in failing to diagnose her taken away by the Court of Appeal.

Her lawyer, Jack Rabinowicz, told *DN* that if she fails in an appeal to the House of Lords she may take the case to the European court in Strasbourg.

But both he and other lawyers believe that a new act, which won royal assent the same month, may make such lengthy court challenges much easier for other disabled people.

The Human Rights Act will allow them to enforce the European Convention on Human Rights in British courts rather than having to go to Europe to do so.

The act, which ministers have promised will come into force "as soon as feasible", will allow individuals to enforce their rights against public authorities. This could include government departments, courts and tribunals, prisons, police, local councils, and hospitals.

Home Secretary Jack Straw said: "The act complements freedoms people already enjoy, with positive rights they can rely on if they believe the state or its institutions has treated them unfairly."

But how effective will the act be for people with disabilities?

Disability law expert David Ruebain said: "I think the act could advance disabled people's rights, by setting basic minimum standards to which public bodies would have to comply."

He said the right to life might help people with Down's Syndrome who need heart transplants, and the right not to be subjected to inhuman or

'If people are being denied treatment, that might be something which the act could assist with, but resources will still be a consideration.'

degrading treatment might also help people denied medical treatment or therapies.

But there are caveats with some of these possibilities.

"If people are being denied treatment," he said, "that might be something the act could assist with, but resources will still be a consideration."

He also thinks the right to liberty might help people living in

England wins independence

Ben England, 23 (*right*), lived in residential accommodation in the west of England for three years until August.

"One of the places where I lived was for old people," he says. "Social services said I needed to grow up before I could move out."

"Eventually I just left the last home I was in and got on a train to go to London."

"For the last three or four months I have been staying with friends on spare beds and floors. Friends and volunteers have often been providing care."

"A 24-hour care package has now been arranged by Greenwich social services and they are also providing me with a flat. But I do not think they would have let me live out in the community unless I had taken action myself."

A spokesman for Plymouth City Council said it had been concerned about Ben's ability to live independently, but the last place where he lived had been a rehabilitation unit where he was getting training to gain such an ability.

residential care against their will. It could also enhance deaf people's rights to an interpreter when they are arrested, and they might be helped similarly by the right to a fair trial.

He thinks the right to private and family life could improve the quality of life of those still in residential care, or receiving care in their own home. And it could help people with learning disabilities to have sexual relationships.

There is also a right not to be discriminated against, which may cover disabled people, but only in relation to their ability to exercise other rights.

In general he said the act could be used alongside other laws but it was difficult to say how much help it would give.

Bert Massie, director of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, was equally circumspect. "Unlike the Disability Discrimination Act, these are broad concepts in this act," he said. "But on some things which affect disabled people, like the right to life, the act is important."

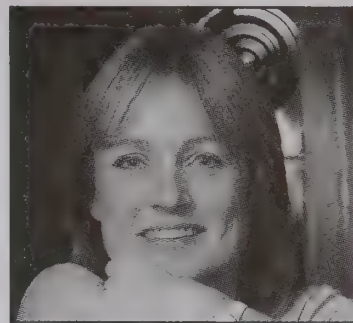
So legal experts and campaigners agree: the outcomes of the act are as yet unknown.



A beta minus for treatment

Nottingham mother of two Carline McGlaughlin (*right*), who has multiple sclerosis, says her consultant can't prescribe her beneficial Beta Interferon because he hasn't enough funding from the local Nottingham Health Authority.

"The thought that I could end up in a wheelchair because I am not being given the drug is



degrading, humiliating and distressing," she says.

A health authority spokesperson said a lack of funds meant not everyone could get the drug.

Down's side to major surgery

Joanne Harris, 16, of Shropshire, (*far right, with her sister Katy*), has Down's Syndrome, and needs a heart and lung transplant.

Birmingham Children's Hospital told her mother Marion in 1995 that no centre in the country would do the operation for any child with Down's Syndrome.

"They said it was because people with Down's Syndrome have a lowered immune system and compliance with drug treatments is a problem," says Marion. "I know she would comply: she is very good at taking medicine. I have spoken

to a leading immunologist who said people with Down's have an ideal immune system."

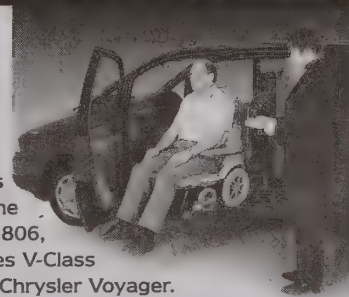
"I have since been to Great Ormond Street, and they have said that they would consider her. But what happens if there are four young adults waiting?"



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Foetus gets treated

American doctors have treated an unborn baby to reduce the effects of spina bifida.

The condition occurs in one in 2,000 births and is caused when there is a hole in the spine. It can lead to paraplegia and hydrocephalus.

The team at the Children's Hospital in Philadelphia created skin flaps to cover a hole in the unborn baby's spine during

the 23rd week of pregnancy. They believe fluids in the womb may be one cause of further damage to the exposed spine.

The baby was born by Caesarean in the 30th week of pregnancy and is now six months old. He can move his legs and previous traces of hydrocephalus have vanished.

The team, led by Dr Scott Adzick, has since carried out

the operation on other unborn babies with the condition.

But the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH) warned that it was not possible to say whether the operation was a success without looking at a large number of long-term results.

Rosemary Batchelor, senior policy and health advisor at ASBAH, said: "Many babies

with spina bifida develop hydrocephalus in later years and even in adulthood."

Meanwhile, ASBAH has produced *Spina Bifida and Pregnancy*, a 16-page booklet for women with spina bifida or hydrocephalus who would like to have a baby. It is free to people with the conditions.

ASBAH, tel: (01733) 555988.

Minister will not meditate

The Government has rejected a call to promote Transcendental Meditation (tm) on the NHS to reduce the risk of heart disease.

A letter to Health Secretary Frank Dobson from the British Association for the Medical Application of Transcendental Meditation (BAMATM) in November highlighted research which suggests that tm can reduce high blood pressure, a known risk for heart disease.

But the Department of Health has said it cannot back one complementary therapy over other alternative treatments.

Heart disease causes 150,000 deaths a year in the UK, and disables many survivors.

Dr Donn Brennan, president of BAMATM, said: "One study of 2,000 people showed that the incidence of cardiovascular disease can be reduced by up to 80 per cent by tm."

A British Heart Foundation spokesperson said: "As part of a package tm has a place alongside exercise, dietary control and in some cases drugs."

Notts doctors loosen the knots



Leanne (bottom) with Stephen, elder sister Krystle and mum Brenda
DERBY EVENING TELEGRAPH

Nottingham doctors have performed pioneering surgery on people with cerebral palsy (cp) to let implanted pumps deliver drugs directly to their spines.

Michael Vloeberghs, of the Queen's Medical Centre, carried out the treatment which allows the muscle relaxing drug Baclofen to be delivered through the refillable pump.

Although the operation has been tried abroad, it is in its very early stages in the UK.

Leanne Derrick, 13, was one of the first people in the UK to receive the treatment in October. Her father Stephen

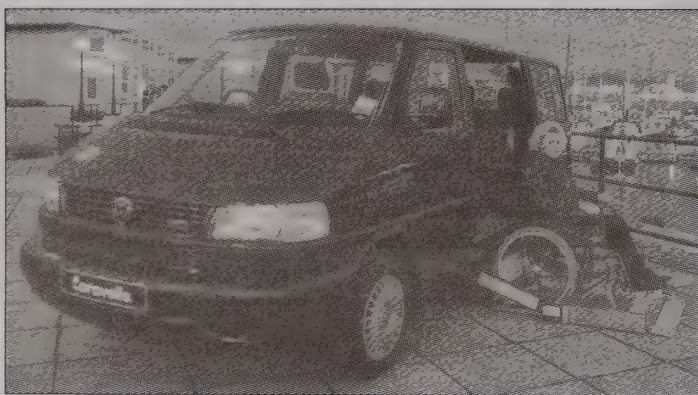
said it had reduced her spasms. "There has been a dramatic improvement," he said. "She is a lot less uncomfortable."

The treatment does not work for everybody and doctors have to work out the right dose for each individual.

Richard Parnell, Scope's research manager, said that as the implant costs over £20,000 people might lose out through local spending decisions.

"We always welcome advances," he said, "but we would have concerns about where you live determining what you get."

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A year to remember?

Sally Greengross discusses the latest UN year, for elderly people

This month sees the start of the International Year of Older Persons, a United Nations (UN) initiative which involves organisations all over the world, ranging from older people's interest groups to government bodies, businesses and entertainers.

The theme of the year is "Towards a society for all ages", emphasising greater integration between youth and older people and enabling us to think together about the issues that will face us in the future.

The year is a springboard for launching long-term strategies on ageing in the next century.

It comes at an opportune time, given the rapidly increasing numbers of older people – nearly 6 billion worldwide, rising by 80 million a year. Two thirds of disabled people are over 60.

Falling infant mortality rates, advances in medical care and increased life expectancy are making populations older. The advances should be celebrated, yet too often older people are seen in a negative light.

In fact, they provide essential voluntary support in the health service and many charities. Without them there would be more paid staff and a poorer quality service.

Older people are increasingly responsible for childcare while parents are at work. And one third of all informal care is provided by those over 65 to partners and relatives. Older people, then, are extremely active members of society.

Age Concern is running the UK Secretariat for the year, aiming to raise awareness, co-ordinate and promote events, and produce information and publicity materials.

Funding from the UK Government is modest – a real contrast with the European Year of Older Persons and Solidarity Between Generations in 1993, which was generously funded by the European Commission.

The Ageing Unit at the UN is also a very small team with no budget to distribute among member nations. It is a tribute to them that they achieve so much, and a source of frustration that there is obviously a long way to go before ageing issues receive the support and resources they need.

Our core programme of activities for the year, to be unveiled by Social Security Minister John Denham on 12 January, will have clear and realistic targets, for if there is one thing we must achieve it is a series of outcomes which



Active volunteers of the Sussex Wildlife Trust out in the woods
AGE CONCERN ENGLAND

really benefit older people.

I have high hopes for the year. The Government has indicated that it will play an active role. Leading disability organisations such as the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People and Scope have expressed interest.

Altogether 45 national organisations make up the Secretariat's reference group. Four groups are developing ideas and activities around four themes that relate to the UN aim: citizenship; organisations valuing older people (which

covers safety, the media, volunteering and business); generations together; and learning through life.

I hope by the end of the year we will have a change of heart and mind among professional audiences, such as the media and those providing education, leisure and direct services.

Free ideas/information packs from Radha Patel, tel: 0181-765 7299, or visit the website at www.iyop.org.uk.

Sally Greengross is director general of Age Concern and secretary general of the Secretariat.

Seeing 'the elderly' as real people would be a start

By Ginny Jenkins

United Nations' international years are designed to raise people's awareness of issues related to specific groups in every member country. 1999 is the International Year of Older People (IYOP). The UN hopes to "promote social progress and better standards of life and achieve international co-operation."

As director of Action on Elder Abuse, I have one goal for this year: to make statement 17 of the UN's Principals for Older People a reality. It says: "Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and free from exploitation and physical and mental abuse".

Unfortunately, elimination of abuse is neither a UN focus for the year nor a UN global target for the year 2001. So it is easy to question the usefulness of a UN year, particularly when, as in this case, little or no funding has come from the UN or the UK government.

Money is not everything though. I have to look back to the International Year of Disabled People (IYDP) in 1981



to remind myself that international years are only the start.

As a relatively young health care practitioner, it had a profound influence on my professional life. I remember coming across Vic Finklestein's story of an able bodied man who comes into a world of wheelchair users. He walks into door frames and gets backache from bending double to talk to people. The caring, chair-using medical profession recommend he uses a chair permanently for his health, and social acceptability.

I also remember trying to get my tongue round "disabled people" and "people with disabilities" when most people spoke of "the handicapped".

IYDP has often been criticised for achieving very little. The UK only passed a limited Disability Discrimination Act in 1995 and discrimination is still widespread. But progress has been enormous.

So I shall be optimistic for the IYOP. It may be nothing more than a public relations opportunity, but if it enables us to start seeing "the elderly" as "people", it could be seen as a success.

To see older people as people first and old second will mean that attitudes have started to change. It is much more difficult to abuse a person than something which is labelled.

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Your van's adaptations may not be to blame

Vehicles work best with careful drivers, says *DN's* David Griffiths

A television programme last month may have made some disabled drivers shudder.

From the Edge, returning for another series, included a piece about disabled drivers and their experiences with apparently dangerous controls.

We heard how one man's van caught fire, and he said he couldn't get out, though there was little evidence of fire damage on the vehicle.

A woman in an F reg van complained that her controls touched her wheelchair and she went out of control. One wonders why she attempted to drive at all in that situation.

The villains, inevitably, were the adaption companies, who were blamed for putting disabled drivers at risk.

Now this is a serious subject requiring thorough research. It cannot be knocked off in about seven minutes. The programme posed important questions, like

the range of prices charged for similar adaptations, but failed to answer them, and it must have left some viewers feeling distinctly insecure. What if in an emergency they couldn't get out of their van?

Let's tackle that fear first. Although in theory this could happen if the door is electronically operated and the battery goes completely flat, in 20 years as a driving assessor and 30 as a disabled driver, I have never heard of any driver getting stuck in their vehicle. If the battery is flat, you couldn't get into the car, could you?

What *From the Edge* failed to address was the role of the driver.

Over the years, the status of having a hunk of metal on wheels outside your home has diminished, and with it pride of ownership – and driver responsibility.

People who need complex adaptations and expensive

vehicles need a high level of commitment and responsibility.

If I close my eyes I can still see the multi-coloured display of plastic shards fountaining up and over my bonnet as I ploughed my new pride and joy into the back of an aged Austin on a garage forecourt.

As a novice, I blamed the hand controls. It was all the converter's faulty workmanship which caused me to lose control while attempting to de-select fourth gear at 10mph in an 850cc mini on an incline using a vacuum clutch.

Had I read the handbook and paid attention to the correct procedure for using gears, I would have known that at such low speeds insufficient vacuum would be available from such a small engine to operate the clutch under a load. So I learned the hard (expensive) way.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that controls are



Van of the future: Ford's concept Transit will have more room

working correctly and any suspect matters are dealt with promptly.

In a sophisticated conversion, just wearing a different coat or shirt can change the way you line up to your adaptations.

Inexperience is a major factor in overlooking potential dangers, so it is vital to know your vehicle and its limits, as well as the adaptations fitted to it. Investing in a Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) advanced driving course is one way of improving yourself.

Servicing is vital and needs to be budgeted for. Even the most mundane hand controls will benefit from a spot of oil or

shot of WD40 from time to time, and clevis pins, bolts and terminals need a periodic check.

Also, many disabled drivers continue to drive on equipment selected when they were a lot fitter, whose performance now fails to meet their needs.

I do see a few examples of bad conversions and the odd "Friday night" car, but total unexplained failure causing a vehicle to crash is, in my experience, very rare. But, course, when it does happen it must be thoroughly investigated by independent experts. The joys of motoring for disabled people must never be clouded by doubt.

ROSPA, tel: 0121-248 2000.

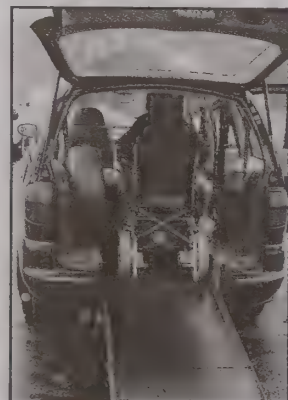


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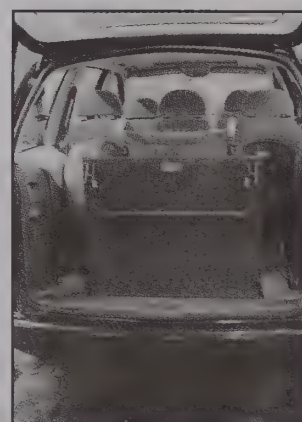
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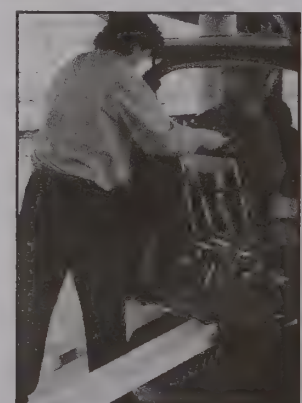


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Doors with a swing

My wife has used a wheelchair since she had a stroke two years ago. We are both octogenarians and naturally I don't find it easy to push her when I come up against obstacles such as swing doors.

We have just returned from a holiday in Spain. I found when using the disability toilets there that I had no difficulty with swing doors. But using them at Gatwick, I could not cope without a third person to hold the door open.

I have had this trouble in two hotels in England too.

I understand the swing doors are there to conform with fire regulations.

I cannot understand, however, why a 15-second, hold-open gadget cannot be fitted which would give time to get in or out before the door closes automatically. If no such thing exists, it would be quite easy to make and fit.

R G Brown
 London SW4

'Extremely competitive'

I would like to clarify the role of DisabEquip following the article "Big cost for house hunt, (DN December).

We manufacture and supply equipment for many types of disability.

We also survey homes, which is free of charge, and carry out building work and installations to make them easier for disabled living.

Tilley Carrow are a house search agency finding homes for people who are too busy, too far away or otherwise unable to search for themselves.

They realised that many disabled people could also benefit from having homes found for them. Their fees are extremely competitive in the market place they work in.

Shaun McCarthy
 DisabEquip
 Bishopsworth
 Bristol

More skill needed

I am 59 and have had multiple sclerosis for 26 years which has forced me to give up self-employment.

Not enjoying the enforced idleness, I decided to take a course leading to the Higher National Diploma in Business Management, and approached my local college, the Dumfries and Galloway College at Heathall, Dumfries.

I was given every encouragement by the college and assured the buildings were adapted to the needs of disabled people.

Once I began the course, however, I quickly realised that the rooms were largely inaccessible without major disruption to allow my powered wheelchair to enter.

The college said it would change the heavy entrance doors, but replaced them with even heavier doors with tighter seals and stronger springs.

Five months ago the only accessible male toilet was badly vandalised. I have been given a key to use the toilet for students with learning disabilities only to find this is usually blocked by a table, sports bags, etc.

Tables in the dining room are two inches too low to allow wheelchair users to eat comfortably. Passing through the electronic book detector in the library is a skill to be learned.

In "No barriers for college entry" (DN November), Sophie Corlett of Skill said: "Sometimes disabled students focus too much on their disability. They have to be told to set it aside and say: 'What do I really want to do?'"

I have managed to ignore my disability for 26 years and now I am reminded of it many times a day. I am seriously considering dropping out of my course.

Michael Cantral
 e-mail

Cycles and trikes for kids

One of the problems facing parents of children who have severe disabilities is to find bicycles or tricycles which the child can use.

I only found a suitable tricycle for my daughter because I took her to Challengers, a play-scheme for disabled children in Stoke Park, Guildford. She learned to cycle there and later Challengers found her a trike.

Our ATB Trike by Quest of Shifnal, Shropshire, has double wheels at the front so she can see the width of the trike in front and steer accurately.

What we need is details of products. Even school or hospital physios do not know them.

George McAdam
 Morden, Surrey

The Disabled Living Foundation has free lists of cycles under the headings: pedal, tandem passenger, 4-wheel, foot-propelled, hand-propelled, power assisted. Specify which sections you would like. Helpline: 0870-603 9177, minicom 0870-603 9176 - Editor

Your views on church access

We were interested to read Eric Bridgwater's letter about churches discriminating against disabled people (DN October).

The Churches For All campaign, spearheaded by the Evangelical Alliance Disability Network, includes the leading Christian disability organisations of all denominations.

The campaign is currently at the consultation stage (deadline 31 January) and intends to produce a standard for accessibility and a good practice guide which will include attitudes to disabilities.

The standard is likely to be at two levels: the basic standard, roughly equivalent to Part M of the building regulations, and the premier standard, which is far higher and gives churches something to work towards.

Each standard will cover mobility impairment, visual and hearing impairment, learning disability and mental health.

They include a commitment to monitoring and continual improvement and are modelled on the highly successful Tourism for All standard.

The consultation document is available in standard print, large print, Braille and on cassette from the address below. Or you can find it on the internet at: www.throughtheroof.org.

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PC pulse

A pig's ear

DN would normally love to have used a photo sent into us of the winners of a drawing competition for children with special needs, run by the pen-friend charity Write Away and the Roald Dahl Foundation.

The children had been asked to draw a picture to accompany Roald Dahl's poem *The Pig*, and their efforts were to be judged by Quentin Blake, Dahl's illustrator.

How uninspiring, then, to see that in the picture the two winning children are shown holding not their own pictures, but an original drawing by Blake himself. Blake declared himself "unable to choose" between the two entries. Unable to choose whether they should be photographed at all, perhaps?

Sample Turkish delight

First, Jenny Spiers and her husband risk going where 'no wheelchair has gone before'



Busy traffic beside the towering spires of the Sultanahmet mosque in Istanbul

TURKISH TOURIST OFFICE

getting me to places "no wheelchair has gone before".

Then it was on to the bustle of Istanbul, an amazing city, almost completely unfriendly to wheelchairs.

The Arcadia was a modern hotel in the old town, accessible except for the rooftop restaurant. Not wanting to miss out on the magnificent views, my husband piggy-backed me up there one night. It was worth it. Our room was on the first floor accessed by a lift.

Sightseeing was done on foot over roughly cobbled streets, up and down huge pavement drops to cross dangerous roads – all vehicles drive at a furious pace. In several places the pavement



Tranquility for Jenny in Dalyan

petered out completely or changed into a tram track.

I think I was the only independent wheelchair user in the whole city. I was looked on as a curiosity. People came up to me in a friendly way if I was alone. Many wanted to know about my chair. I hope I created some business for the manufacturer, though it did let us down on several occasions: the wheel kept falling off or scraping on the body. My husband had a penknife with him and, sitting me on a handy wall, he effected immediate repairs.

In the ancient market I bought strings of dried red chilli peppers, herbs and spices and turkish delight, and looked at

all the wonderful leather goods, especially clothing, which were much cheaper than in the UK.

We found one disabled loo in the whole of Istanbul and that was in the station gents, not very savoury to say the least.

In one beautiful old mosque I was accosted by a well dressed man who asked if he could take my photo. He hastened to say that he was a doctor specialising in spinal injuries and had come to Istanbul from Birmingham to give a lecture to Turkish doctors on rehabilitation.

He told me that Turkey is way behind in this field. Many soldiers, disabled on national service, have a poor prognosis. They are sent home to their families where they more or less vegetate, with no treatment, physiotherapy or aids to help them become independent. Or they end up begging on the streets. The doctor needed a photo of me to show that disabled people can live free and normal lives.

For me, Istanbul remains one of the wonders of the world. I recommend a visit – providing you have a strong companion and are not afraid of adventure.

The holiday for two cost £1,178, including flights, transfers, half board at the Sultan Palace and bed and breakfast at the Arcadia. Treasures Travel is in London, tel: 0171-494 2252.

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SCOPE
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY



On their way: Joe (left) and Stuart set off for the day in El Salvador. Starting in Mexico, they travelled through Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica to Panama.



Accessible transport: Stuart's wheelchair in the pick-up when they went to a remote coffee plantation in the Guatemala highlands

Nine countries

Stuart King backpacked with a friend through Central America, be

It's hard backpacking overland from one end of Central America to the other.

Backpacking in an electric wheelchair with a rucksack and pulling handle too short to be pulled by, and only one helper (Joe), is even harder.

Nearly three months after touching down in Mexico City, I flew out of Caracas, Venezuela, two pounds lighter in person and ten pounds heavier in luggage. What lay in between was an exhausting, exhilarating trek through nine countries – an unforgettable experience of dysentery and delight.

As the trip was my idea, it was down to me to do all the preparation, hence the reason why we were still packing the rucksack at the airport. I had, however, made some headway in adapting my wheelchair. The battery box became our mobile safe. The bar across the rear wheels was a makeshift mount for the special 110V battery charger – bolted on, it made transfer of the chair to various vehicles an interesting sight.

The handlebars became the main bag holders, and every other nook and cranny swallowed everything from

urine and water bottles to puncture repair kits and spare inner tubes.

When we discovered that our trusty *Lonely Planet Guide to Central America* had nothing on Mexico, and nor did Gatwick Airport, it started to dawn on me just what an enormous task lay ahead.

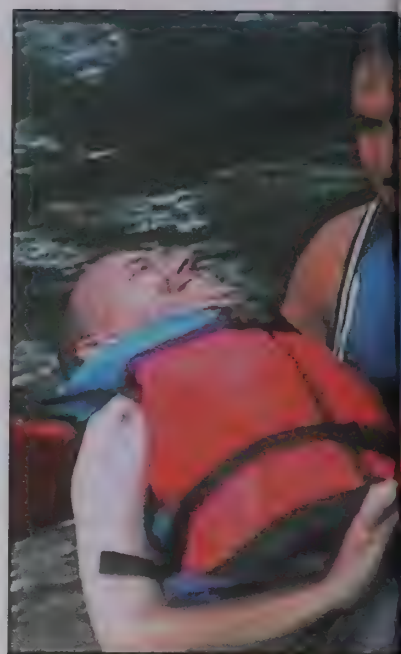
We had no idea of the accessibility of the local transport, no place to stay and no one to call.

Eventually we did track down an English guidebook in Mexico City, only to find it had been printed before I was born.

Thankfully the train station was still in the same place, so after a couple of days spent acclimatising, we headed east on a 2,000 mile journey lasting 11 hours.

Waking from a snooze in the carriage, I found my empty wheelchair and the conspicuous camera case around my neck had attracted the unwanted attention of five increasingly inebriated young lads. Eye contact and smiling were being blocked by alcohol and I could feel the tension rising.

With the slight advantage of



Lift off: Stuart and Joe take a break

Joe's command of Spanish along with the building blocks of cigarettes, we slowly manoeuvred them from hostility to inquisitiveness. By the time we alighted, we had to placate the boys who were now almost fighting among themselves to help us. From foe to friend, I find the boundaries become more flexible and uncontrollable when you're travelling.

Just before entering Belize we rested up in Chetumal and

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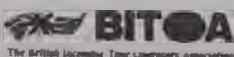
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in three months

hurricane Mitch struck, and had enough adventures for a lifetime



White water rafting in Costa Rica

cross our first major character, "psy". This French Canadian had driven his bamboo-pick-up truck all the way down Montreal and, after a tiff with his wife/carer, was in the for a more up-to-date model to me. Cruising through the streets of the border town, he was in his wheelchair with footrests raised, water-bottle and straw attachment on and bottle opener dangling. I led at his level of comfortable pace. The clouds, floating over

the animated palm trees, exposed once more the sun and the stained marks on my grimy window.

Belize was a delight with its Caribbean nature, US-flavoured tourists and faint hint of colonial yesterdays – British and Mayan. Young boys expressed their upward mobility with talk of holidays in "da States" and the girls were all shy and golden with innocence.

In another border town, at the gates of Guatemala, we met another person with a disability.

We were wandering along a dirt track dotted with dilapidated wooden huts. On the verandah of one hut sat an elderly woman and two young schoolgirls. As I neared, I saw a man in his 20s slouched in a deckchair, awkward and askew. His grey trousers were gripped tight with a white tourniquet tied around each side of his groin. His head was pushed to one side by a pillow, making him strain to retain precious eye contact. Accidentally paralysed during a routine operation on his back, Evan was cared for by his mother and young

nieces. His life consisted of watching it pass by.

There followed the usual soul searching and feelings of uselessness. Aware that empty promises are worse than no promises at all, I nevertheless could not relinquish the burden of good opportunity and have now sent him a diagram of a simple-to-fabricate head-mounted pointer that could enable him to turn the pages of a book, operate a keyboard or work the tv remote control. To gain control, however insignificant and remote, is to have the power to make decisions and choices – and live once more.

We continued our journey south and east. In Guatemala we arrived in a tiny village before the electricity, which was still waiting to be pinned to the newly installed tree-trunk pylons. In the ancient colonial city of Antigua, defended by placid volcanoes and hindered by horrendous cobbles, we arranged to spend an incredible ten days with a French family living in the highlands.

Volunteers of the charity Friends of the Children of the World invited us on a



Mexican musicians serenade you in Puerto Vallarta

vaccination run to a remote coffee plantation. The workers, spending their lives chasing work, had never seen a tv before and were amused by our mini digital video camera with built-in monitor.

We arrived in Panama City with its deal-making culture moulded into the airport's secretive little phone-booths and quickly realised we'd hit the end of the line. The "Aztec two-step", little money and an

almost constant slog for accessible accommodation and transport brought forward our departure date. We flew to Caracas and then home.

A flight to Mexico City with return from Caracas is usually £500-£600, but Iberia quoted £399 plus taxes. Shoe-string budget of £20 a day all in. Stuart used Nexus Travel, tel: (01273) 385412. Lonely Planet Guide to Central America, £12.99.

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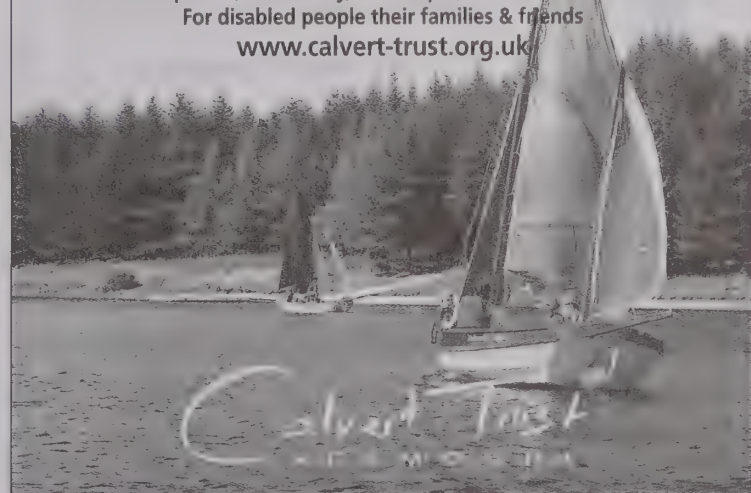
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Never call it plain sailing

A life on the ocean wave may seem idyllic, but Dan Batten finds you have to tread a tricky path before you reach that gangway

What could be more relaxing than setting sail on a cruise liner? Picture it: the swanky cabins, sumptuous feasts, and sunny days. Paradise.

Or at least it is if you aren't a disabled person, and in particular a wheelchair user. The pattern which emerged when *DN* looked at cruises available from high street shops wasn't so much a vision of perfect peace – more a battle on the high seas.

The most obvious fault was the lack of information on arrangements made for disabled travellers in brochures. Several travel agents were willing to help me, but my holiday planning would have required many lengthy calls, as I was a "special" passenger.

Further research showed that disabled passengers, especially wheelchair users, were either discouraged or blatantly barred from travelling alone. They were sometimes welcome with an "able companion".

In any case, "disabled" is used as a blanket term. Information given does not make clear how severe your disability has to be before you are refused permission to travel alone.

To establish whether you will be allowed on board, you are

generally asked to state the nature of your disability well in advance, not only to assess if your needs can be catered for, but also to see if you are an insurance risk. Many companies also require you to have "full medical clearance" before accepting your booking.

Another hurdle would appear to be your wheelchair, or rather the size of it. As a general rule the chair must fold, which pretty much rules out anyone using an electric wheelchair. Many cruise companies also insist that it must not be more than 22.5in wide, which probably excludes larger passengers using wheelchairs.

If you are fortunate enough to climb aboard, chances are that's where you'll be staying for the duration of the cruise. Many ports are severely wheelchair-unfriendly, and the shore can quite often only be reached if you are willing to be transferred from your cruise liner to a small launch or tendered service. This is rather a disincentive, as hours ashore will be considerably less for disabled passengers reduced for some disabled passengers.

If you have to be left behind, chances are you will be on your own. Although it would appear



P&O's *Oriana* has eight adapted cabins – not bad for a cruise liner

that cruise companies are waking up to the fact that disabled people want to enjoy a cruise holiday, the number of

Seas the day

The Jubilee Sailing Trust's tall ship *Lord Nelson* is more accessible – and romantic.

The ship, which has lifts between wide decks, speaking compasses and other adaptations, is having a special millennium cruise between 23 December 1999 and 3 January 2000.

While the cost is not cheap – £1,700 per person all-inclusive – it's a once in a lifetime experience. For more details, tel: (01703) 449138.

cabins which have been adapted for disabled passengers is still a minute percentage in these vast ships. So don't expect a wheelchair gathering.

This is bemusing when you consider that one of the largest markets for cruises is the over-65s, who may require some of the features considered only necessary for disabled people in their standard rooms. If some of these special adaptations such as height-adjustable basins and roll-in showers were fitted in more cabins, wouldn't it make life easier for passengers of all shapes and sizes?

If the above catalogue of horrors hasn't put you off (and I hope it hasn't), then you'll definitely need to find out well

Lines to get you cruising

Norwegian Cruise Line, tel: 0990-906 060.

Princess Cruises, tel: 0171-800 2468.

P&O, tel: 0171-800 2345.

Fred Olsen Travel, tel: (01473) 292222.

in advance what's on offer from your choice of cruise operator.

Norwegian Cruise Line has leaflets on disabled passengers, and some accessible cabins.

Princess Cruises, a division of P&O, operates an eight-ship fleet in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. All ships have adapted rooms.

P&O itself has eight adapted cabins on its *Oriana* liner and six on the *Arcadia*.

Other lines are less impressive. Fred Olsen Travel's *Black Prince* liner, which operates out of Harwich, offers only two partially adapted cabins. Disabled passengers must, naturally, be accompanied by a carer.

So, if the thought of a cruise has lit your fuse, give it a go. With thought, planning and persistence, it could be the thrill of a lifetime. You would be something of a pioneer too, and perhaps persuade these companies to improve facilities.

But you might find that, because of all the aggravation you get, cruising would have to be something you were absolutely hellbent on doing.

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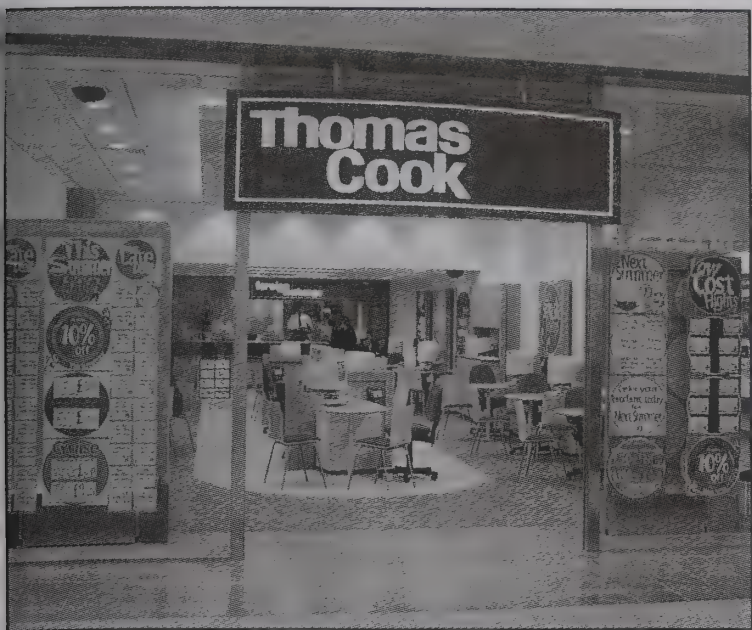
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Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details C. Hodgson.
Tel (01924) 454300.

WEBSTERS
Spend a weekend break or holiday in Wiltshire with Mary and Peter. One ground floor twin bedroom. Category 1 accessibility.
Tel: (01722) 339779 for more details or brochure.
<http://www.SmoothHound.co.uk/hotels/websters.html>



ROGER REEVES PHOTOGRAPHY

Carlson Worldchoice Tel: (01293) 820207

1. We liaise with tour operators and adhere to industry reference manual standards.
2. Yes.
3. Information on the condition is required before it is granted.
- 4a. Our airline guide, which is used by shop staff, lists disabled travellers' services, and is consulted during booking.
- 4b. By reference to our guide.
5. It can be pre-booked, but it is

arranged by the airline.

6. Customers need to contact our medical department, who will advise accordingly.
7. No, but we produce a special needs information checklist.
8. A minimal number.
9. We do not produce our own brochures, but are looking to produce alternative formats of the ones we carry.
10. People with special needs can book an appointment prior to travel to discuss their needs.

Questions

1. How is access for disabled people checked and assessed at the destinations you cover?
2. Does insurance provided by your company cover damage to wheelchairs during carriage?
3. Does insurance provided by your company cover pre-existing medical conditions?
- 4a. Do you keep records of airlines which you think are accessible and recommend them where possible to disabled customers?
- 4b. How do you decide that they are accessible?
5. Can you guarantee free oxygen on flights booked through you?
6. Do you allow guide dogs to travel on flights booked by your company? If not, are there any plans to allow this?
7. Do you have an advice line for disabled travellers?
8. In how many of your branches can staff use simple sign language or British Sign Language?
9. Are any of the brochures you produce available in alternative formats for visually impaired people?
10. Do you have any other services for disabled people you would like to mention?

Trouble agents

Dreaming of a holiday is easy, but planning it is harder, especially if you are disabled. Travel agents should make things more simple, but as our survey discovered, that's not always the case

Going Places

Tel: (01483) 771144

1. We rely on information supplied to us by the tour operators.
2. Yes.
3. Cover is dependant on the condition and is provided at the discretion of the insurance company.
- 4a. No
- 4b. Our travel advisers would call operators, on behalf of the traveller, describing their needs to ascertain this information.
5. No.
6. This is up to the airline.
7. No.
8. Approximately 30 branches.
9. No.
10. Easy access to all of our shops, where possible.

Hogg Robinson Travel (business travel only)

Tel: (01252) 372000

1. All special needs are registered when booking, so the airline is automatically informed and can make any necessary arrangements.
2. Damage to articles, including wheelchairs, up to £500.
3. All conditions are covered, at our insurer's approval.
- 4a. No, but access to such information can be arranged.
- 4b. Not applicable (N/A).
5. No, it is up to individual airlines to guarantee this.
6. N/A.
7. No, but our 24hr assistance line is available to all travellers.
8. N/A. 9. N/A. 10. N/A.

Thomas Cook Group

Tel: (01733) 563200

1. Tour operators survey buildings to check access criteria.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, if prior notice of any condition is given, and the passenger is declared fit to travel by their doctor.
- 4a. No.
- 4b. By consulting the airline and trusting its judgement.
5. No.
6. No. The proposed animal passports may change this.
7. No, but a list of tour operators who are disability-friendly is available.
8. Approximately 5%.
9. No.
10. Our home pick-up service can take you to the airport. Some of our brochures have disability travel information.

Thomson Holidays

Tel: 0171-387 9321

1. Resort staff inform us of special room features, such as door widths.
2. Depending on who one travels with. For instance, Britannia has wheelchair insurance, but individuals should check.

3. No. 4a. No. 4b. N/A.

5. No. It must be paid for and booked via our welfare team.

6. No.

7. Our welfare team can advise disabled passengers.

8. N/A. 9. No.

10. Our welfare team and factfile information base can advise disabled travellers.

United Norwest Cooperatives Tel: (01782) 577770

1. Clients must trust brochure information. We do not check.
2. Yes, with a maximum of £200.
3. Conditions must be declared before travel. Excesses may be charged.
- 4a. No. 4b. N/A
5. This is not our responsibility, but that of the individual airline.
6. See 5.
7. No, but an advice leaflet is being planned at present.
8. Numbers not known, but we are undertaking a survey to find out.
9. Only if individual tour operators provide them in different formats.
10. Customers are encouraged to discuss their needs so we can tailor their holiday for them.

American Express Europe (tel: [01444] 252000) and MTG (UK) (tel: [01294] 462199) were asked to complete our survey, but failed to respond before DN went to press.

CHALFONT LINE HOLIDAYS

NEW 1999 BROCHURES AVAILABLE NOW

With Chalfont Lines' unique three tier care options, we have Escorted Holidays to:

- DEVON • IRELAND • BUTLINS
- SCOTLAND • SWITZERLAND • VALKENBURG
- THE DUTCH BULBFIELDS • MALAYSIA
- ORLANDO • AND MANY MANY MORE

And introducing our new Accessible Villa brochure

Over 80 accessible villas in the UK and Europe. All property personally inspected by our staff.

Please send me a copy of:

- ☐ Escorted Holidays
☐ Accessible Villas

Please tick and return to:

Chalfont Line Holidays
4 Medway Parade
Perivale
Middlesex
UB6 8HR
A.T.O.L. Number 3103

or contact us on:

Tel: 0181-997 3799, Fax: 0181-991 2892,
E-mail: holidays@chalfont-line.co.uk

Everyone can have fantastic fun on holiday in the peaceful Oxfordshire countryside
Take part in creative activities or just soak up the atmosphere and good company
Call Kingfisher Barn now: (01235) 537538
Registered with Oxfordshire Social Services

Crabhill House – SURREY
Fully accessible country house – with purpose-built extension. 26 single en-suite rooms. 5 twin rooms. Licensed bar. CTV. Conservatory. Lovely gardens. Electric hoists. Help buttons. Nurses/volunteer support. Day trips to Brighton, London, Theatreland etc. From £255 pw – food/personal support included. For information/booking form tel: 0171-833 4579 ext 132.

CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS
Peaceful "Fhuairin Forest Cottages" (category 2 access since '94) now booking for '99. Most dates still with choice of either cottage. Prices from £250/wk including all laundry and holiday cancellation cover, with short breaks "pro rata". Range of mobility aids including hoist available. Comprehensive local access guide to enhance your visit. Tel: 01479 821642, e-mail: dv.dean@virgin.net, website at: http://freespace.virgin.net/dv.dean/

Sandpipers – SOUTHPORT
Overlooks Southport's Marine lake/ beaches. Trips to the Lake District, Blackpool, Alton Towers. Accessible holiday centre. 12 single rooms. 12 twin rooms. Help buttons. Indoor swimming pool. CTV. Bar. From £270 pw – food, full personal support/ volunteer help included. Registered with Social Services. Most physical disabilities catered for. Brochure? Call: 0171-833 4579 ext 132.

DEVON – Converted barn
Next to owner in beautiful Teign valley. Specially designed for wheelchair users. Lift to 1st floor, wide doors, wheel-in-shower. Sleeps 4. Pets welcome.
Tel: 01647 24445

ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL
Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year.
Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2.
Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

**LLETY MIERI
LLANDEILO, WEST WALES**
3 charming award-winning cottages, designed for wheelchair users and their families. Peaceful rural location overlooked by Dinelwr Castle. Each warm and well equipped cottage sleeps 4. Extensive grounds and games room. Open all year. Short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558 823 059) for brochure.

**St. Peter's
View, Suffolk**
For holiday brochure:
Tel/Fax: (01728) 685358

**SCOPE IN IPSWICH/
EAST SUFFOLK**
Holidays for the disabled and carers. 5/6 berth caravan 400 yards from Felixstowe sea front and promenade.
Details and bookings for 1999, please contact: Jim Bone,
20 Victoria Street, Felixstowe IP11 7EW,
Tel: (01394) 391981.

SELF-DRIVE RENTAL of lift equipped minibus, Fiat Fiorinos and hand-controlled automatic cars. Also accessible taxi service plus accessible conversions.
WHEELCHAIR TRAVEL LTD, Guildford
(01483) 233640

Stay on our farm in Cornwall, 5 miles from Fowey. Feed the sheep, cuddle a lamb, meet the cows, and live in the old granary, converted especially for you. 3 bedrooms, Access 2.
Tel: (01208) 873419.

CORNDENE – A SHROPSHIRE HOLIDAY
"Get away from it all" to this comfortable old rectory in beautiful, peaceful countryside. There's a special welcome for our disabled visitors & many return year after year. B&B plus Visitor's Kitchen. Superb access (Tourist Board Category 1), spacious ensuite ground floor rooms. Write, phone or fax: Clare & David, Corndene, Coreley, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 3AW, tel: (01584) 890324.

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE
HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE**
Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you.
Book now for 1999.
For more information tel: 0181 885 4971 evenings.

SCOTTISH BORDERS. Two delightful, superbly equipped fully heated stone-built cottages in traditional courtyard setting with open fires in peaceful surroundings with beautiful views. Both suitable for disabled and able-bodied people, one totally wheelchair accessible (disabled categories 2&3). Each STB graded 3 stars and sleep six adults. Private parking and gardens. Pets welcome.
Tel/Fax (01450) 860678. E-mail: kate@blacklee.demon.co.uk

Holiday help without hassle

Looking for help in planning a holiday? Then read on to get some useful ideas from Dan Batten

Thinking of fun in the sun far away? Or maybe a trip to one of the prettier parts of this land is more your thing?

If you've booked through people who know how to make life easier for disabled travellers, you'll hopefully suffer no misfortunes. If, however, you've had past problems, let *DN* take you on a magical tour which might take the mystery out of getting away.

A good first stop would be The Holiday Care Service. This



Paddle power: Trying out canoeing at the Avon Tyrell Activity Centre
AVON TYRELL

invaluable service will be able to help you with most things you can think of, including information on accessible accommodation as recommended by the Tourism

For All Consortium, obtaining a carer for your holiday, or checking out holidays which may be a little out of the ordinary.

The Royal Association For Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) will also be able to help. It produces a holiday information pack (£5 including p&cp) which includes information on all aspects of planning your holiday, from transport through to insurance. It also publishes a number of individual leaflets on holiday related subjects, such as specialised accommodation and transport and equipment.

Tripscope gives free information over the phone

about transport or local, national and international travel for disabled and older people.

Avon Tyrell Activity Centre, in the New Forest, has activities for young people of all abilities, including archery, fishing, team-building exercises, canoeing, and much more, all under the watchful eye of trained instructors. The centre offers full-board or self-

checking out.

If you are travelling and using a wheelchair, a look through one of the Smooth Ride Guides may help. Guides published so far include Australasia, eastern USA, and the UK. The books cover accessible transport and accommodation, and examine sports and leisure facilities and places of historic interest.

Assistance Travel Service (ATS) arranges holidays for



Sea view: six of Groom's holiday homes offer guests a seaside stay
HELEN STONE/JOHN GROOMS

catering accommodation, and is opening a fully accessible cabin, built with money from the National Lottery Charities Board, and other supporters. Happy memories from my younger days make this worth

groups of disabled people to almost any destination in the world. Complete holiday packages are available, as well as escorted tours and adapted self-catering caravans.

Companions Limited offers



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Wheelchair Hire • Manual & Electric Chairs
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Bathroom & Toilet Aids
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38650 Los Cristianos,
Arona, Tenerife

TEL/FAX: (00 34 922) 79 73 55
E-mail us at orange@interbook.net

HOLTON LEE

HOLIDAYS OR SHORT BREAKS AT THE BARN OR GATEWAY COTTAGE

The Barn



The Barn: thoughtfully designed, fully accessible flexible accommodation for up to 9 guests. Full board, care staff available.

Gateway Cottage: self-contained and offering self-catering accommodation for up to seven people. Fully accessible ground floor, living room, kitchen, large bathroom, one double and one single bedroom. Upstairs two twin rooms plus bathroom. All refurbished to a very high standard.

Set within 350 acres of beautiful and natural landscape looking towards the shores of Poole Harbour, within easy reach of Wareham, Bournemouth and the Isle of Purbeck.

For full details:

Holton Lee (DN/JA), Freepost (BH1679), Poole, Dorset BH16 6JN
Tel/Fax: (01202) 631063, E-mail: holton@lds.co.uk
Visit our website: <http://www.lds.co.uk/holtonlee>

Gateway cottage



Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them, to see that their particular needs can be met.

WYE VALLEY Specialising in Holidays for Disabled People

Glorious valley & river views, 3 acre gardens, 3 lounges & conservatory. T.V./Radio all rooms. Menu choices. Physio, hairdresser.

MINIBUS OUTINGS TO TINTERN, SYMOND'S YAT ETC. - TAKES WHEELCHAIRS - CAN ALSO COLLECT/RETURN TO YOUR HOME.

Activities, entertainments. Rates from £235/week. (01594) 530581 for brochure etc.

The Priory Res. Home, nr Tintern NP5 4TP

HOLIDAY FLATS FOR DISABLED GUESTS

at Par in Cornwall, which is run by Scope. Each flat sleeps 6 - 1 guest must be disabled. New showers, suitable for wheelchairs. April and Oct' £60 pw. May, June, Sept' £95 pw. July and Aug' £100 pw. Reg. Charity No. 221875.

Contact the Manager, tel: (01579) 344108

Bonneuil Holiday Cottages

- Designed for people with disabilities in mind -

Own an idyllic holiday cottage in rural south west France.

Bonneuil Holiday Cottages is a unique UK owned farmstead development project - site to include 6 cottages, large covered swimming pool, river fishing and tennis courts.

Prices range from £28,000 per cottage.

For further details contact: Bonneuil Holiday Cottages, 53 Woodville Road, Mumbles, Swansea SA3 4AE.

SHOREFIELD COUNTRY PARK

Downton, Hampshire:

Award winning coastal site with indoor/outdoor pools; sports/leisure facilities; restaurants and bars. Wheelchair accessible, fully equipped 1/2 bedroom chalets, sleep 4-6.

Call: K. Pepper on 01590 642073 - New Forest Mencap Charity No. 1038962.

Cornwall - The Lizard Peninsula.

Luxury converted barn in flower filled courtyard. Sleeps 6. N.A. Grade 2 (wheelchair user with assistance). Central heating. All mod' cons'. Large shower room/wc with walk-in shower. 1 dog. No smoking.

Tel: (01326) 241356.

The Lake District, Bowness-on-Windermere

Burn How Garden House Hotel situated in delightful garden setting with everything on the ground floor: bedrooms, restaurant, bar, lounges, patio and toilets - no steps! Parking outside each room. Come and relax in spacious bedrooms in peaceful setting only 2 minutes walk from lake and shops. Award winning food, highly commended for comfort cuisine and warm hospitality.

Telephone for brochure: (01539) 446226, fax: (01539) 447000, website: www.burnhow.co.uk e-mail: burnhowhotel@btinternet.com

Self Catering Mobile Homes, Strode Park Foundation

Strode Park House, Heme Bay, Kent CT6 7NE

Tel: (01227) 373292 Fax: (01227) 369033

Three holiday mobile homes situated in the park land of Strode Park House. Attractive and tranquil setting with small lake, woodlands and surrounding farmland. Beside the lake is the entrance to the "Woodland Way" - a path designed for wheelchair users that winds around the lake and through the woodland behind. Each mobile home is a spacious 44ft long by 10ft wide and is designed for wheelchair users with able bodied attendants/family. Each unit, comprising of one double bedroom (with monkey pole over bed) and twin bedded room, accommodates 4 people. Ramped entrance, wide doors and corridors, wheelchair toilet and shower and sinks at wheelchair height. All homes are connected to mains water and drainage, electricity and Calor gas, are fully heated and have colour TV. A washing machine, tumble drier and payphone are available nearby. Personal linen must be provided. Car parking facilities outside each mobile home. Beach and rail 2 miles, shops 1/4 mile, bus outside the grounds, Heme Bay 1 mile, Canterbury 7 miles.

1999 Rates: Season end March to end September
High season: £175 per week
Low season: £110 per week

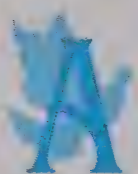
Gas, water and electricity are included in the charge. Apply: Holiday Booking Office.

North York Moors National Park

Moopenry Cottage, Levisham, nr Pickering. Self-catering cottage - sleeps 4. Fully equipped to a very high standard and designed specifically to accommodate the wheelchair user as well as the able bodied. South facing and over-looking paddock and hills beyond. Full details/brochure from Frank and Maggie Ashworth.

Tel: (01751) 460311

Category 1, National Accessible Scheme.



HOLIDAYS for DISABLED PERSONS

Accessible Accommodation Guaranteed.

Flights to Tenerife, Lanzarote
Malaga, Costa Almeria, Majorca,
Algarve, Malta, Rhodes and Florida.
Weekend breaks - Paris,
Dublin & Amsterdam.
Holiday homes in France.

Please send a Brochure to: _____

Access Travel (Lancs) Ltd,
16 Haweswater Ave, Astley, Lancs,
M29 7BL. Tel: 01942 888844.

DN1/99





All buoyed up: Guests take a swimming lesson in the inviting pool at the Avon Tyrell Centre AVON TYRELL

companions, carers, nurses and drivers to help on your trip. It will also help to book your holiday through ABTA approved travel agents. Its website, www.ds.dial.pipex.com/companions/, gives information on services.

Can Be Done's 1999 brochure shows its wide range of accessible holidays, which this year includes trips to Scandinavia, Thailand and Switzerland. All hotels booked through Can Be Done are at least three-star, and this year's star trip is a holiday to Disneyland Paris (as part of a coach tour or on your own). If you don't fancy that, city breaks to London, Paris, Dublin and Amsterdam await you.

If the South West of England is your destination, a look at the Access Guide to Caradon (a district council in Cornwall) could be useful. Researched by Proper Access Now in Cornwall (PANIC), it covers popular resorts like Polperro, looking at access to shops,

pubs, accommodation and places of interest.

Groom's holidays is a branch of John Grooms, which has 13 accessible holiday homes in Britain, including four hotels at the seaside resorts of Minehead, Llandudno, Babbacombe and

either day trips for up to 12 people or cruising holidays. Relax on the water and let skipper Mick Pacey guide you and keep you entertained with his knowledge of the waterways you'll be travelling.

Chalfont Line offers a range



Accessible class: Groom's holidays Jane Hodge Resort in the Vale of Glamorgan JOHN GROOMS

Clacton. Also on offer is the Torre das Arcas self-catering farmstead in Portugal.

A new edition in 1998 to the Groom's range of trips was the Sarah Rose II, a 63ft long, 10 berth, beam barge providing

of holidays, both abroad and in the UK, for people wanting to travel individually or on an escorted tour. Assistance with personal care can be provided and the company uses its own fleet of accessible coaches on

many of its escorted tours.

If a driving holiday is your thing, RAMP(Route-Finding and Access Maps) can steer you on the road to a happy holiday. The service can help disabled drivers find accessible cafés and restaurants, overnight accommodation (without internal or external stairs),

toilets (including those on the RADAR key scheme) and tourist attractions. With 24 hours notice, RAMP can give you coloured road maps detailing the best routes to destinations.

If you want to investigate alternative transport at your destination, Door to Door, a guide detailing access to all types of transport for disabled people produced by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), can help.

If you want the train to take the strain, you can get cheaper fares by applying for a disabled person's railcard. Details are available from major stations and travel enquiry offices. If you are going to use the train and need assistance, notify the train operators at least two days in advance.

MOLD, NORTH WALES:

Luxury, wheelchair accessible bungalow. Two bathrooms, en-suite. Sleeps 4/5. £325 weekly. Brochure: Lynne Dowling, 23 Gleneagles Road, Great Sutton, South Wirral L66 4NF.

Tel: 0151-339 5316

DELORAIN HOLIDAY HOMES,

Helm Road, Bowness-on-Windermere. Self-catering, wheelchair accessible cottage (ETB Cat. 2) and flat secluded in 1.5 sylvan acres, yet near Bowness Bay, boats, shops, food, cinema. Free swimming/sauna. Four posters. Sleeps 2-6.

Tel: (01539) 445557.

BRYN MEIRION GUEST HOUSE, Amlwch Road, Benllech, Anglesey, Gwynedd, LL74 8SR Tel: 01248 853118

Family run guest house, situated on a superb coastal site with panoramic views. Has been adapted along with the landscape gardens to cater for wheelchair user. TV lounge, dining room and en-suite bedrooms on the ground floor. Two new additional specialised units with electric beds and hoists. Special diets catered for. Various aids available on request. Open all year. Ample car parking.

There is always a warm welcome at Bryn Meirion Winner of Wales Tourist Board Best Small Tourism Business Award 1992 and the 1992 and 1994 Holiday Care Service Award.

COSTA BLANCA

Two brand new 3 bedroom / 2 bathroom holiday houses. Wheel-in-showers. Garden. Sun terrace. BBQ. From just £195 per week. For brochure call:

Accessible Accommodations Abroad tel: (01452) 740820

Holidays in Lakeland. Nr Penrith. Category 2, carefully restored self-catering barn. Sleeps 4/6. ETB 3 keys, commended. Away from crowds but well-placed for northern Lakes, Pennines and Eden Valley. Open all year. Telephone 01768 892596.

GREAT CLOTHES FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS

...but don't take our word for it, listen to what our customers say!!



"A user-friendly catalogue...very easy to read" - MS

"Trousers could not be nicer and are a perfect fit" - MM

"It felt good to be in proper trousers instead of 'shell' trousers" - BW

"Thank you for such outstanding service. Many heartfelt thanks" - TT

Phone for a free copy of our colour brochure (24 hr).

0141-774 9000

Wearable Clothing Ltd, Glasgow G33 4AN.

Need a break for yourself or your carer?
if so

Helen Ley House

providing respite care for people with multiple sclerosis offers you

- * First class personal attention
- * Qualified nursing staff at all times
- * All single rooms
- * Varied choice of menu including special diets
- * Views of open countryside
- * Daily outings and other leisure activities
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- * Hairdressing service available on site
- * Transport service from Midlands possible
- * Competitive rates

Still interested?

Then write or telephone: The Helen Ley Home, Bericote Road, Blackdown, Leamington Spa CV32 6QP. Tel: (01926) 313550, Fax: (01926) 888972 E-mail: mngt@helenley.org.uk Reg. Charity No. 288362

A warm welcome awaits all our guests old and new

Hire a Hoist to Help

Do you use a hoist to transfer from your bed, chair, toilet, car or bath?

Staying in a hotel for business or pleasure? Is your hoist too big or heavy to take with you?

Ring Arjo for the solution. We are the world's largest manufacturers of patient handling and bathing hoists.

And they are available for you to hire, anywhere in Britain. Just ring 01452 50 60 50 and we will arrange delivery, give instructions in the use of the hoist and then collect it when you are ready to leave.

Couldn't be simpler.



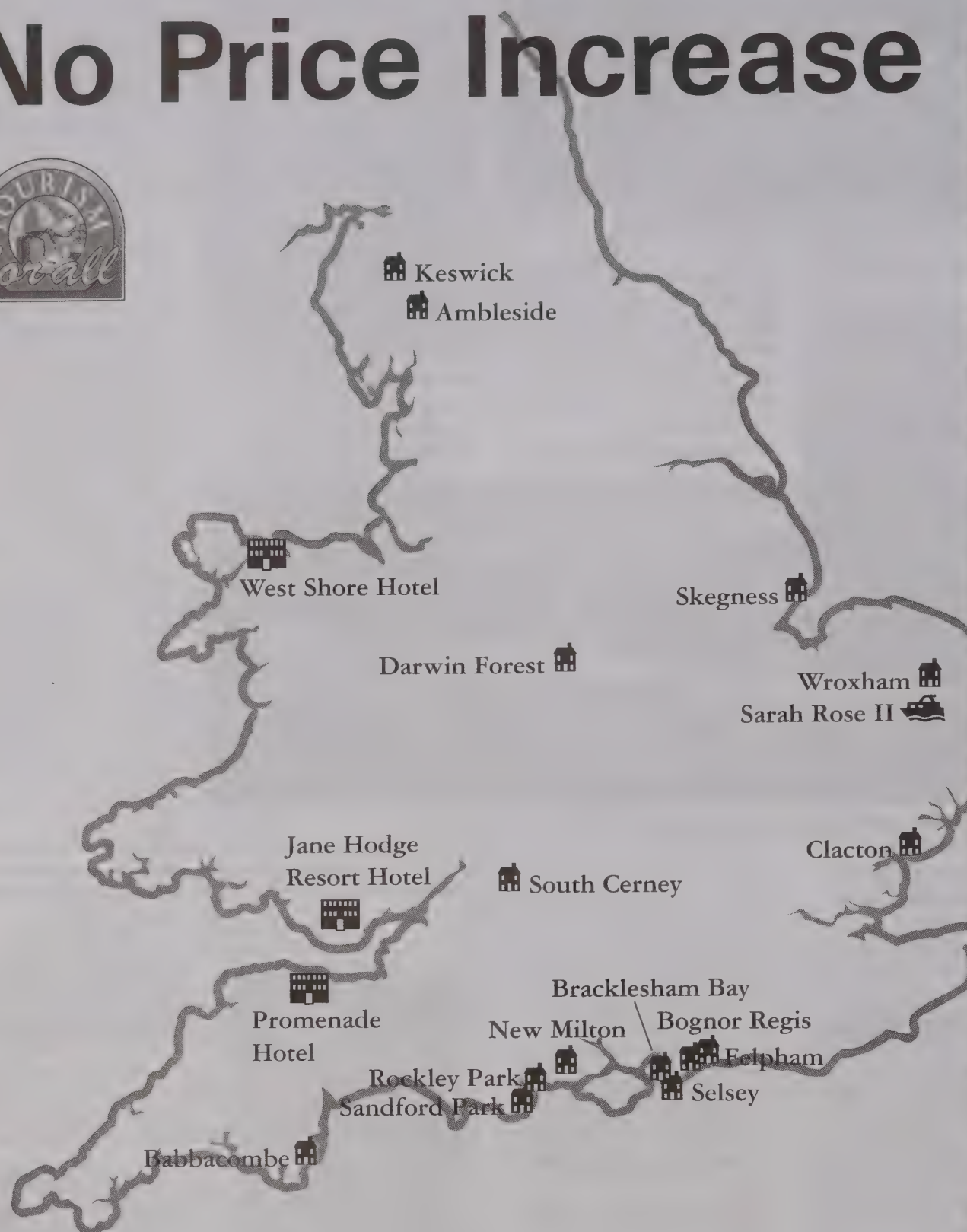
Arjo Ltd
St Catherine Street
Gloucester
GLOS GL1 2SL

Hire Line number: 01452 50 60 50

Minimum hire period one week

Our Commitment to Affordable Holidays

No Price Increase



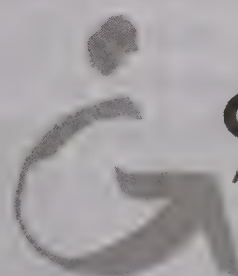
You can call direct: For The Jane Hodge Resort Hotel call 01446 772 608. For The Promenade Hotel call 01643 702 572. For The West Shore Hotel call 01492 876 833. For boating or other self-catering holidays call 01446 771 311.

**For your FREE brochure call the
Grooms Holidays line on**

01446 771 311

Grooms Holidays is committed to providing disabled people, their friends and families with accommodation which is affordable, accessible and memorable. We have more category 1 accessible rooms than any hotel chain in the country and through the caring

quality of our staff we believe our guests enjoy holidays which they can remember for a long time. In order to support our commitment and to enable more people to use us this year we have held our prices at the same level as 1998.



Grooms Holidays
Affordable, Accessible, Memorable

Registered Charity Number 212463

Hero's spider stew

Hero Nightingale tells Lisa Hitchen how she's spun her way onto the web

Hero Joy Nightingale is bursting with news. She has just won a trip to Australia in a competition writing about her website. She is so excited she shakes her head, squeals and waves her arms as she tells me about the trip. When brother Alarik comes in from school, he remains stonily unimpressed but, I notice, does not refuse the possibility of going as Hero's second carer.

"Bro" might be surprised but most people who know Hero won't be amazed. Hero is an exceptional person despite looking every inch the precocious 12-year-old with long fair hair, resolute blue eyes and a complexion to die for. Straight away she turns the tables on me and asks why I work for *DN*. I've read enough of Hero's internet magazine, *From the Window (FTW)* to expect this and answer her honestly. If I had lied, I know Hero would have spotted the lie and probably the reasons behind it.

Her intelligence, perceptive skills and her wicked sense of humour are all evident in *FTW* which is published on-line quarterly and is packed with stories, poems and life experiences from every corner of the virtual globe. Hero edits it herself and the work is typed onto the world wide web through the finger power of her mum Pauline.

With contributors like Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, I assume she must be well connected – probably through her parents?

Not particularly, it seems. Her father is the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent but he rarely brings his contacts home for Hero to "chat up". Most are the result of a trawl through *Who's Who* and a lot of begging snail mail.

Despite critical acclaim from the likes of Melvyn Bragg and Alan Ayckbourn, she is disappointed with the lack of "visitors" to her internet site. "Guess how many hits (visits) I had when I was reviewed in the *Independent*?" she asks. "A 1000?" I guess. "27" she says. "27,000?" I gasp. I'm way off the mark – it is just 27.

She attributes the poor response to being "wordy and un-hip." But I suspect a lack of

awareness of *FTW* amongst an infinity of websites is a bigger factor.

Hero has "locked-in syndrome," a rare disability which means she can't talk but she can read, hear, compose music and communicate through hand movements on her enabler's hand.

Pauline taught her to spell after both she and her mum became dissatisfied with choice boards (communication aids). She says: "Mum thought 26 letters was a better choice list when I was four so she made a letter board and off I went. I had freedom to say what I thought. I hated being predictable. I hated choices. What do you want for tea – chips, meat? Silly choices like

'Physical disability hurts in a groaning in the wind creaky old tree sort of way'

that so I would spell out 'spider stew' just to get a laugh and exert my individuality. It got mum hooked. She can't bear not listening to me."

In *Editor's View* in the first edition of *FTW*, Hero describes her disability. She writes: "It hurts not to be able to unshackle the unceasing burden of petty manifold responsibilities from too busy Mother. It hurts in a groaning in the wind creaky old tree sort of way like a strong wind buffeting me and all I can do is wait for it to pass by."

Some have been sceptical of Hero's abilities. Both mother and daughter are well aware of this and Pauline hands me a five-page summary entitled "How I communicate" to explain that Hero talks "as easily with my mother as you do with your tongues." It seems the world finds it easy to accept Hero's visible physical

disabilities but not her "invisible" abilities. She says: "I get so miserable at the way the world does not treat me nicely."

Hero, like many disabled people, has at least found the world of the internet a less discriminatory medium for exercising her creative muse.

But it is through her musical ability that she discovered computing. Kent County Council provided a PC and internet access so she could explore the music in her head. It wasn't through any desire to be a great composer though, Pauline tells me. "She was immensely bothered by the music. Hero said: 'There is a din in my head and I need to get it out.'" says Pauline. This "din" has lead to a list of musical achievements surfers can view on her Internet cv which include a ballet called *Jane* performed by the Royal College of Music (RCM).

The idea for the online magazine grew out of two things. The first was leaving the Royal Academy of Music which she attended as an eight year old after a dispute over a test. She says: "I got so depressed I couldn't talk to anyone. I was referred to the Haverstock Clinic in London. It was the Internet that got me better, not clinical psychologists."

The other was her correspondence with four "e-pals": a disabled Scot, a photojournalist with a head injury from Montana, a chemistry professor from Oregon and an Australian amputee. Hero asked each to tell her their experiences "from the window". She says: "Then I thought 'This is boring, I need a magazine.'" In April 1997, *FTW* was born.

What does she find more liberating – her magazine or her music? Both, in different ways. The music is part of her spirit. The internet is "huge fun" though she admits being



Spinning the future: Hero has big plans for life and her magazine

an editor does not always bring out the best in her contributors. So she is planning an "Editor meets" section to her site where she'll go out and grill people.

Apart from journalism, Hero is busy making her tv debut with two Video Nation slots for the BBC.

She plans to "do and see everything" starting with Australia next month. But Hero doesn't want to go all that way and miss out "on what lies in

between" so Mum is looking into round-the-world tickets.

Beyond that she says: "I want to be a self-determining adult, earning a living as a musician or writer" and she fancies "a nice disabled artist" as her future man. In a few years she tells me, she'll be searching for this "intelligent hunk" – probably in cyberspace.

FTW: www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/hojoy

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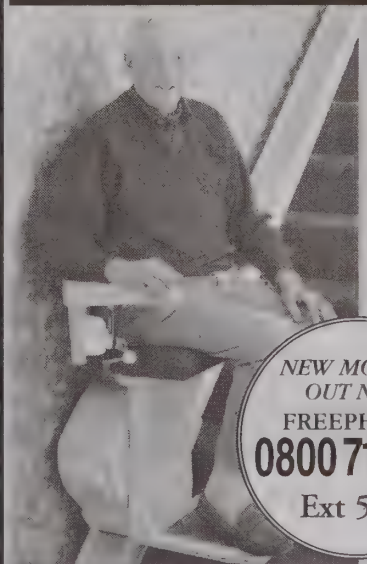
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Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW

All about your A, B, and C
Can you tell me where I can find out about hepatitis C? I have a little grandchild and need to know whether there is any chance of me passing on any infection. I had a transfusion of blood in February 1991.

Eileen, Norfolk

Many of us have problems understanding the difference between hepatitis A,B and C and knowing how to treat the conditions. So it is useful to know there is a very helpful source of information. The British Liver Trust Hepatitis Line provides clear information about each condition, including possible treatments, and how to avoid becoming infected.

I'm just not done roaming
When I do a lot of walking my feet get so painful that I feel like screaming.

I have been to several consultants who all say my feet have deteriorated because of the way I walk and they cannot do anything because X-rays don't locate the problem.

I like to be active, but this problem is ruling my life. I am

A point at the stake

May I, through your audacious column, revive the question of euthanasia? Despite the quirky view of the disability movement, the suffering of some disabled people can, I think, reach a point when they would wish to be helped to die.

I was reminded of this on seeing the film *Elizabeth*, which opened with three people being burned at the stake. The slowness of the fire is such that their agony is prolonged (a deliberate practice, I believe). They cry out that the fire burns too slowly, whereupon citizens rush forward with brushwood to accelerate the blaze, and speed their deaths. Who in such circumstances holds the moral high ground?

John, London

Who, indeed? Never let anyone say that this column dodges the awkward issues. I know readers will want to continue the debate.

sure I am not the only person with cerebral palsy (cp) who walks on their toes. If any readers have learned to cope with this problem I would welcome hearing from you.

Denise, Berkshire

I know others with cp who have this problem. I suggest you ring the Scope helpline who would be glad to advise you.

Justice can be blind
As a disabled magistrate with limited mobility, who has

served for 27 years, I would like to protest at the view that a blind person could not be a magistrate because it is necessary to watch any witness like a hawk for body language.

Magistrates – and judges, for that matter – up the arguments on both sides. The prosecution has to prove the case, and we certainly do not watch to see if the defendant or witness crosses their arms in defence, as has been claimed.

Judgement is based on safe evidence and on the majority

decision of the three sitting magistrates on any one day.

I have argued for years that we must make courts fully accessible. Why, for example, are there no profoundly deaf magistrates? Sign language interpreters would be no less accurate than interpreters of foreign languages.

Roger, London

This is an issue which has been raised in *DN* before. It is clearly an equal right whose time has come, and *DN*, unsurprisingly, is in the forefront of the move.

Worried by tissue damage
I had to write to you to share my present torment. I am worried that I might have acquired brain damage. I have been told I have damaged tissue but not one doctor has mentioned this dreadful possibility.

Oliver, Buckinghamshire

It is unlikely that doctors would keep from you any suggestion of brain damage.

Doctors, nowadays, are much more open about these things. It is usually considered important to keep patients

informed and then to help them come to terms with any information which may be upsetting. Have you asked your doctor directly about acquired brain damage?

It is important you get the right information, as you may have nothing to worry about.

You could also contact the Headway National Head Injuries Association. It has a nation-wide network of over 100 self-help groups and 35 day centres. I am sure you would find them helpful.

I wanna be an amputee
I am an able-bodied person with a "normal" life, but I have a desire to be an amputee.

I know people will find this completely mad but this urge is very real and something I have to live with every day. Even as a child I would strap a leg up to pretend I had an amputation. This aroused me sexually.

I feel that unless I work out a way to become an amputee or meet a disabled girl with whom I can share this secret, I will spend my life alone.

Every time I try to work out how I can lose a limb, I think how much heartache I would bring to my family.

What do disabled people think? I suppose some may say I'm selfish or weird – or both.

Name and address supplied

I suggest it is healthier to keep such ideas in the realm of fantasy. That way you can ensure you do not incur desperately damaging side-effects for yourself and serious hurt to your friends or family. Fantasies are an enriching part of our lives and, kept in the land of imagination, can avoid damaging consequences for others.

Desire cannot be trusted. Wanting something (or someone) can sometimes be destructive. You may need medical help and I suggest you speak to your doctor.

British Liver Trust Hepatitis Line, tel: 0990-100 360.
Headway National Head Injuries Association, 7 King Edward Court, King Edward Street, Nottingham NG1 1EW, tel: 0115-912 1000.
Scope helpline, tel 0800-626 216, 11am-9pm Monday-Friday, 2pm-6pm weekends.

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Theatre

Of dicks and disability

Television

Paul Darke

Yes, Alan Bennett's play *Kafka's dick* at the Piccadilly Theatre, London, is about Kafka's dick – and indirectly about disability. But no, you do not see the offending organ. His father uses it, or rather the threat of revealing the size of it, to blackmail his son into pretending that he had been a model parent.

Kafka is disabled by the fear of social attitudes to the size of a man's penis – and implicitly also oppressed by attitudes to himself as a man traumatised by his father's cruel treatment of him as a child.

The long-dead Kafka, brilliantly played by John Gordon-Sinclair (Gregory of *Gregory's Girl*), his lifelong friend and biographer Brod, 30 years dead, and eventually his father, appear in a



Eric Sykes (Father) and Denis Lill (Sydney) in Peter Hall's production
JOHN HAYNES

contemporary middle-class household. It also happens that householder Sydney is a Kafka enthusiast.

Sydney's wife Linda gets along famously with Kafka in a homely kind of way. He is

much more interested in the way she crosses her legs. (Kafka, a clumsy looking man, was famous for marvelling at "commonplace accomplishments," notes Bennett).

Here, I think, is another

message from the deeply humane and very funny Bennett. Observe the endearing little things about people. Enjoy. Don't stereotype.

Eric Sykes plays Father, who lives with Sydney and Linda. He is waiting for the social services, and fears they will take him away. Speculating that Kafka might be a health visitor in disguise, Sydney quips: "The social services are famous for their imagination".

Sykes plays the bemused Father with brilliant, slapstick pathos. Later, he told me that, as a disabled person, he too likes to get away from the stereotypes. "I'm not 'hard of hearing', I'm deaf. I'm not 'visually impaired', I'm blind." And he hates the way deaf people are typecast as "a bit of a laugh".

Nick Lewis

All those who say disability is invisible in the culture should take up tv reviewing.

We have had disability bits on *Children in Need* (BBC1), *Home Front* (BBC2), another *Holiday* episode (BBC1) and Channel 4's *Garden Doctors*. All of them were sensible, suitably politically correct and awfully normalising in their attitude towards disabled people.

No doubt all the programme makers feel they have done their duty and provided a social service. "Sad really, but one mustn't grumble."

I'm being too hard on them, I know. At least it gives society a little bit of variety and spice to watch of an evening. Interestingly, though, they were all somewhat confused in what they were saying or articulating about disability.

This is true, too, of the new series of *From the Edge* (BBC2, Tuesday 7.30pm) which gives mixed messages about disability. It is a programme that amazes me more and more each time I watch it.

By far the most interesting disability programmes on tv in the last year were ITV's *Changing Faces* (24 November) and BBC1's *QED* "The Bionic Woman" (1 December). Both revealed the truly frightening nature of modern medicine and its determination to rid society of disabled people.

This was not their intention. They wanted to show how medical advances were "helping the disabled", from plastic surgery for people with Down's syndrome in *Changing Faces* to electronic spinal implants for paraplegics in *QED*.

Changing Faces used two families with a young child and an older man, who all received plastic surgery to make them more "normal".

QED followed the medical profession's attempts to make paraplegic Julie Hill stand and walk and cycle so that she could be more "normal".

These programmes frightened me, literally, and *Changing Faces* brought me to tears – it's becoming a habit – at the sight of adorable four-year-old Michael bleeding from his eyes, nose, ears, chin and cheeks, wrapped in bandages, moments after radical plastic surgery. All carried out in the name of normality.

All I could feel was that this is not love and it is definitely not care, but it is the future. Help!

Jazz

It's a gift

Alto saxophonist Vaughan Hawthorne-Nelson was one of the young black jazz talents to emerge from the '80s London jazz scene. Along with the likes of Courtney-Pine, Julian Joseph and Steve Williamson, he was loosely affiliated to the Jazz Warriors, an orchestra of black and Asian Londoners



Hawthorne-Nelson: 'spiritual'

who fused contemporary jazz with Caribbean, African and Indian sources. He studied composition at Berklee College in Boston, USA, and worked with some top American names.

Then, from 1988 to 1996, he put his music career on hold to study counselling psychology. He fulfilled a long-held vocation to work in a home for mentally disturbed children. It sounds corny to say this, but the experience seems to have imbued his music with a real spiritual sense. It's certainly

apparent in his new release, *The Gift*, a sprawling album which borrows heavily from Coltrane's music of the early '60s.

There's the same epic sax improvisations allied to Vaughan's smooth, treacly tone. The style is less abstract and more structured than Coltrane's – Vaughan's a great storyteller, with a strong melodic sense. His backing band help to sculpt an atmospheric setting. For the most part, this is a great, spacey slice of modern British jazz.

John Lewis

Theatre

Richard III

Shakespeare's "hero" is a megalomaniac who butchers awkward relatives, friends and allies, but is also a man "deform'd, unfinish'd". Does the Royal Shakespeare Company's production, now on tour (Bradford, Bath and London), and Robert Lindsay's Richard temper the association of deformity with inhumanity?

Well, the audience is initially swayed to side with Richard, sharing in his pleasure in exploiting people's gullibility. But there's little understanding of the character beyond that, given the shallow performance here.

It would have been more illuminating to have had from Lindsay some self-awareness beyond this boast that Richard makes: "Who needs a body-beautiful when you have the intelligence and wooing skills I possess?"

Still, it's a hard nut to crack. Better productions than this have still failed to confront the ambivalent emotions of a typical audience to this play.

Alan Rolfe

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Guessing game

Software programs that can suggest what word may come next are a helpful tool for dyslexic schoolchildren, says Janet Larcher

School teachers are always talking about voice input software (VIS) when they ask me for an assessment of a dyslexic pupil.

I wish they wouldn't, because people with dyslexia actually find it difficult to use VIS. They cannot work out which words the software has not recognised, and so the match between what is said and what is written gets steadily worse.

But there is other software which many dyslexics find helpful, particularly at school.

Prediction software, for example, can be helpful for those with mild problems, who

are trying to type and amends its guesses every time you type a letter.

If the software is set to offer, say, nine guesses, then after three letters there is about an 85 per cent probability that the required word will be offered. You can then select the word, usually, or you can copy it.

To personalise the system, family or friends can type unusual words into the word processor that the prediction software is being used with, so that it can be added to the computer's own dictionary. What's more, dictionaries for

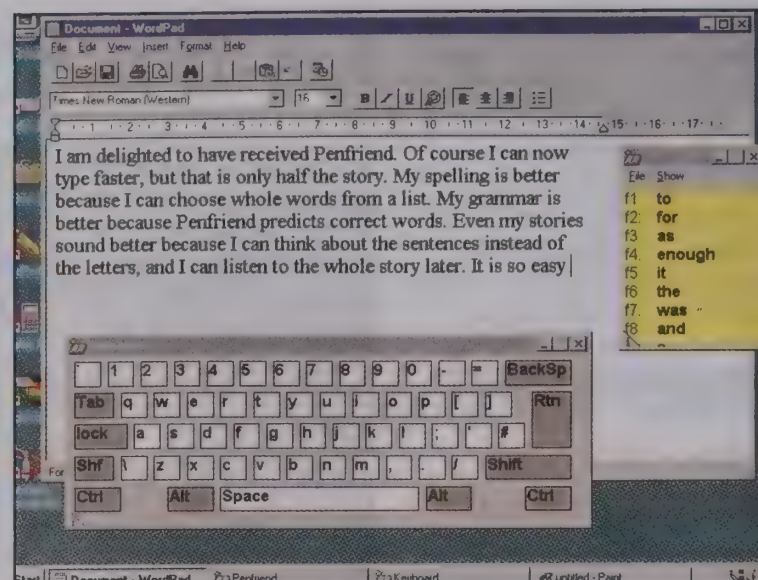
words for that lesson being predicted. After all, chemical names are not much use in History lessons.

This kind of software generally calculates how frequently and recently a word has been used before making a prediction. There are other more advanced programs, such as Co-Writer or the Windows version of Penfriend, which also use grammar rules. This increases the likelihood of a correct word being predicted.

When all of the predictions look very similar, the program allows you to listen to the predicted word, which can help you decide whether it is the correct one.

Co-Writer also gives you options to see the word in the sentence, which sometimes helps in the decision-making process, or to have the sentence read to you. You can also write in enlarged font while what is sent to the word processor is in normal size.

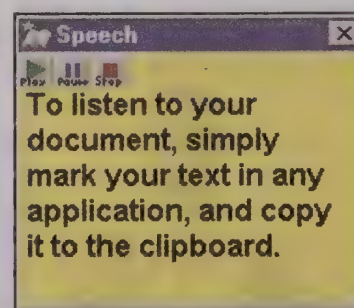
The program textHELP!, which has been widely publicised for people with dyslexia, was updated in 1998 and now offers a screen reading facility which will even read pull-down menus for you and a separate database for homophones (words that



Penfriend works by predicting words, but also uses grammar rules

sound the same but are spelled differently, such as "pear" and "pair"). It can also expand abbreviations. "TYLL", for example, can become: "Thank you for your last letter."

A program which has arrived on the market in the last month



Many programs can speak too

is Writing for Symbols 2000. This is not a prediction program, but it does provide the facilities to write with reading symbols and to hear the text spoken. Its spell-checker also uses symbols.

The program Write Outloud's major selling point is that it

will speak each word as it is typed and provide a talking spell-checker. In fact it highlights each word as it speaks it – to highlight the link between the written and spoken word. This program incorporates the Franklin spell checker, said to be the best at recognising dyslexic spellings.

For younger writers or those with a limited vocabulary, Clicker3 may be helpful.

This program provides a grid for each letter of the alphabet which can be filled with words by a parent, teacher or carer for use by the child later.

Words in the grid can be listened to before they are selected. New words can be added to each grid, and are automatically sorted into alphabetical order.

For users with severe reading or language difficulties, symbols and pictures can be displayed together with each word in the grid.

Of course, whether these get used in the final writing depends on the program you are using with Clicker3.

But if you don't feel up to making your own grid, "quickfire" grids – or interlinked grids of words and symbols organised by topic – are also available.

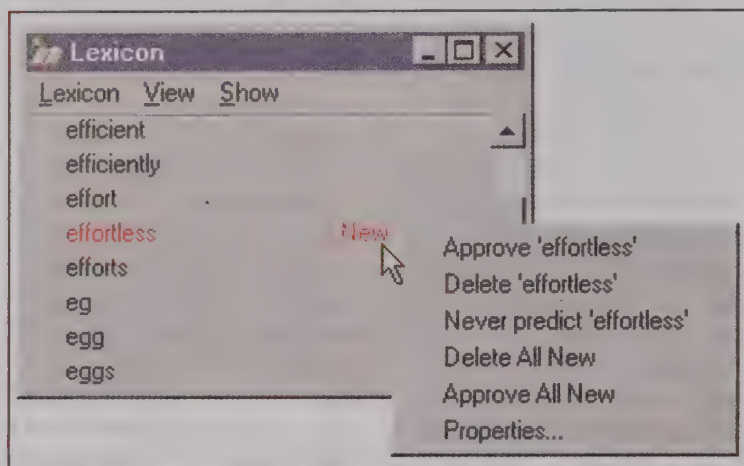
Prophet costs £70 for both Windows95 and 3.1 versions. Tel: (01865) 763508.

Penfriend for Acorn computers costs £25. The Windows version costs £60, or £50 without speaking facilities. Five copies cost double the price. Tel: 0131-668 2000, or website: www.jasper.co.uk/penfriend/, and download free demos. Co-Writer costs £99, and Write Outloud £71. Tel: (01925) 241642.

textHELP! costs £95. Tel: (01223) 420101.

Writing with Symbols 2000 costs £160. Five copies cost £220. Tel: (01926) 885303.

Clicker3 is now on promotion at £70, or £110 for five copies. Usually it costs £80, or £120 for five copies. Tel: (01604) 671691. All prices exclude VAT.



Prediction programs offer up a list of possible words you could use

can at least recognise the word they want.

A program called Prophet, for example, can guess what you

different school subjects can be saved onto your machine, thereby increasing the likelihood of the appropriate

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Information

Values into Action has published four booklets for people with learning difficulties. *Certainties without Centres* looks at day services provision, *Able and Willing* explores support, *Pointers to Control* covers direct payments, and *Choice and Control* looks at decision making. They are clearly laid out and contain quotes, references and contacts. £5 each (plus £1.50 p&tp). Order from VIA, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2 6HG, tel: 0171-729 5436.



The National Autistic Society has launched a website. It gives information on autism, Asperger syndrome and the charity's work, including publication resources, parliamentary information, research details, courses and vacancies. It is aimed at those with an autistic spectrum disorder, their families and professionals. See their website at: www.oneworld.org/autism_uk/.



The National Information Forum (NIF) has added a leaflet on the provision of information to Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian and Pakistani people to its *How To Provide Information Well* series. It covers information and culture, how to develop clear communication and translation information. £3.95 (less if more than four copies), from NIF, BT Burne House, Post Point 10/11, Bell Street, London NW1 5BZ, tel: 0171-402 6681.



Help the Aged has published an advice leaflet called *Keep out the Cold*. It tells people how to keep warm, how to improve heating in your house, how to pay and what to do if you can't afford to, plus it has details on cold weather payments and useful addresses. Order from Help the Aged, St James's Walk, London EC1R 0BE, tel: 0171-253 0253.

Migraine Action is a support group that aims to work as a bridge between those who get migraines and doctors. It has a helpline, a postal information service, produces a quarterly newsletter and various leaflets on all aspects of the condition. Contact it at 178a High Street, Byfleet, West Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7ED, tel: (01932) 352468. Its website is at www.migraine.org.uk.

Help

BBC Digital Radio is setting up a listening panel to monitor and report on the BBC Digital Radio Service on a weekly basis. If you have the time to listen to many hours of radio each week, and would like to listen to interference-free radio reception then it is looking for you. Please contact Toby Davey, Project Assistant, BBC Digital Radio, tel: 0171-765 4004, e-mail: toby.davey@bbc.co.uk

What's on

Disability West Midlands hosts *Accessing Goods and Services under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995* (DDA), 19 January, Edgbaston. Looking at disabled people's rights under Part 3 of the Act and what to do if you feel you have been discriminated against. For an information pack call Disability West Midlands, tel: 0121-414 1616, minicom: 0121-414 1188.

The Employers' Forum on Disability will host *Retention of Long Term Sick and Disabled Employees*, 3 February, South Bank, London. With reference to the DDA it will look at making reasonable adjustment, what is reasonable, and emerging case law. For booking form contact Clare Flory, The Employers' Forum on Disability, 60 Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NY.

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Your stars



By *DN's* astrologer
Marion Stanton

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

Start the New Year by getting some clear structure in your life. Don't discuss plans with those close to you until you have them on a firm footing.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)

Despite your urgency to get a scheme off the ground, there's plenty of time. Use your partner – they can help. Don't make big decisions at the end of the month as the moon's eclipse might cloud your judgement.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)

A close friend or lover will lend a hand this month, so the pressure should ease. Frenetic energy turns into a positive flow by the end of January.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)

You could feel in limbo this month. Outside forces are holding you back and the tide is against you. Be patient – your turn will come. Concentrate on preparing your future plans.

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)

Everything is going just fine, so don't let January's lunar eclipse ruin your dreams. Take stock of yourself and move on to better things.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)

Actions speak louder than words. Don't be tempted to argue yourself out of a situation – walk out instead. A female friend could help you out around mid-month.

CANCER (23 June-23 July)

As the full moon is in your sign at the start of January, you'll start the year with some big ideas. Don't let others talk you out of doing something exciting which might bring rewards.

LEO (24 July-23 Aug)

January's eclipse of the moon could bring an explosive situation to a head. You can handle this two ways. A good blow out might clear the air, or, if you want to safeguard a friendship, lie low until things calm down.

VIRGO (24 Aug-23 Sept)

It's all work and no play for Virgos, and you'll probably thrive on it. But remember to give your loved ones some attention, too. Be sure to make them feel part of your plans.

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)

Inspiration is still burning for Libran's, but don't irritate loved ones – give them some attention. Keep your career, and relationships, on fire this Christmas. The work will still be waiting in the New Year.

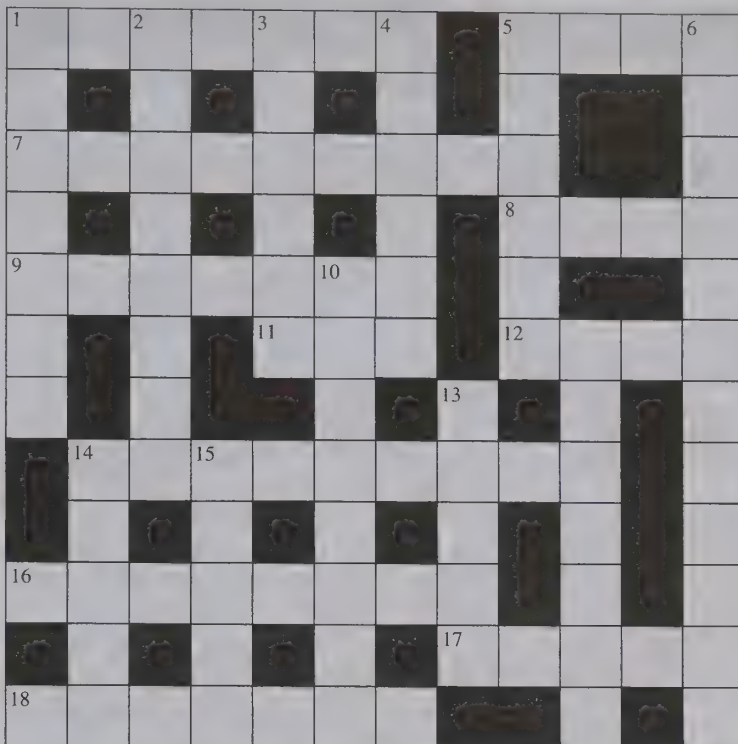
SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)

Don't be impatient to get things done in January. You

DN's crossword

Answers on page 32

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

1. Text telephone (7)
5. Way out (4)
7. Cockles or mussels, for example (9)
8. Alert or excited (4)
9. Make bigger (7)
11. Japanese currency (3)
12. Level (4)
14. Helper (9)
16. Communication device in a booth (8)
17. Slow pronunciation (5)

DOWN

1. Puzzle (7)
2. Without justification (8)
3. Salad vegetable (6)
4. Young woman (6)
5. Breathe out (6)
6. Any late glint (anag)
10. Stem gone (anag)
13. Signalled with hand (5)
14. Modify – perhaps for wheelchairs (5)
15. Part of flower (5)

have worked hard, but make sure you take the time to put finishing touches to your project before things start to take off at a rate of knots at the end of the month.

★SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)

Make this month a time of

quiet reflection and preparation. You can't afford to trust in luck. Precision timing, planning and dialogue are needed (not one of your favourite pursuits!). It will pay off if you can curb your impulsive tendencies just for a while.

Candid Dan dids



More of
life by the
Batten
pattern

New Year and the Christmas hols are here as you read this. Besides all the merriment and over-indulgence, I'm also contemplating another yearly ritual – New Year's resolutions.

Being the chap I am, it pained me to think that I might have any unfavourable aspects to my person. So, with real effort, and after careful consideration, I thought I might try and tidy a few areas in my life.

First up, the continuation of my recently enforced drink limitation routine. Tired of having King Kong taking up frequent short-term tenancies in my head, my bottle emptying has been tempered of late, with friends howling maniacally when ordering an orange Oasis for me. But guess who walks home in a straight line?

Secondly, I WILL go on the "lads' holiday" to Gran Canaria for around 10 of us. I have until July to prepare for the carnage, when resolution one is likely to be firmly jettisoned.

The campaign to get Windsor to take a job in London, as he has threatened to do so for a while, will also be intensified. The missing piece of the puzzle – his presence in the Big Smoke – will be eagerly welcomed by many others in my circle, with

concerns of his effects on one's sanity being the only worry.

I have also had a resolution made on my behalf by friends – to find Dan a suitable female companion. I've informed them many times before that such a maniac doesn't exist. Why they insist on trying to pair me up I don't know, as they always mocked me for looking "sickly sweet" when I last had a girlfriend. Some kind of sick sport is my guess.

I will also continue my crusade to get another tape into Graham's car stereo, as Pearl Jam's *Ten* is getting to be a little predictable. Some Machine Head sir? The Beatles perhaps? The latter is more likely, as the other suggestion drew more than a few expletives.

Graham is somewhat amused by his new-found fame, and laughs when I tell him people ask how "Buddha" is. He isn't exactly flattered by his new name, and was seriously considering taking legal advice regarding some of my comments about him. I then reminded him that the law states you can only sue if comments are untrue, and, after admitting that everything said was horribly true, "Rumpole of Arsenal" withdrew his complaint. He now feels horribly humbled. I feel vindicated.

Whatever your resolutions, have a wonderful 1999. Where it will take me, I know not. Maybe down the road to some sane friends. I need them.

SUSSEX HEALTH CARE

NEW SPECIALIST UNITS IN HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX

In October 1998, a new dual, registered, purpose built specialist unit was opened in Horsham, for younger adults (18-35 years) with physical disabilities. The two 10 bed units are located close to all the local amenities on a main road leading into the centre of Horsham.



Every resident will have an individual plan of care and support with provision of a full activity/continuing education programme.

**YOU ARE WELCOME
TO VISIT**

Each bungalow unit has a sensory courtyard garden at its centre and there is a spacious activity centre with multi sensory room and spa pool on the site.

The units have been built to a very high specification and all rooms have track hoists and en-suite facilities.



If you would like further information about this new accommodation, or would like to visit, please phone: **KINGSMED LODGE, tel: (01403) 211790 or (01403) 217338.**

Disability Now is on the internet. Visit our site at <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

Here's another selection of useful websites. We're always on the look out for more, so keep sending them to Damien Vessey, address on page 2.



CHARITIES

- Arthritis Care:**
<http://www.vois.org.uk/arthritiscare>
- Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH):**
<http://www.asbah-demon.co.uk/index.html>
- British Deaf Association:**
<http://www.bda.org.uk>
- British Institute of Brain Injured Children (BIBIC):**
<http://www.bibic.org.uk>
- Headway (National Head Injuries Association):**
<http://www.headway-national.demon.co.uk>
- One Hundred Hours (complex needs):**
<http://www.onehundredhours.demon.co.uk>

GOVERNMENT

- Charity Commission:**
<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>
- Disability on the Agenda:**
<http://www.disability.gov.uk>
- Home Office Voluntary and Community Unit:**
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/vcu.htm>
- Low Pay Commission:**
<http://www.lowpay.gov.uk>
- New Deal:**
<http://www.newdeal.gov.uk>

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- British Educational & Communications Technology Agency:**
<http://becta.org.uk>
- Computer Centre for People with Disabilities:**
<http://www.wmin.ac.uk/ccpd>



What's on

The Norah Fry Research Centre and the Bristol Self Advocacy Research Group host a workshop conference called *Researching Together*, 28 January, Bristol. CHANGE, Skills for People and Simone Apsis will be present. Closing date for forms is 14 January. Booking forms and details from Val Williams or Karen Gyde, Researching Together Conference, Norah Fry Research Centre, 3 Priory Road, Bristol BS8 1TX, tel: 0117-923 8137, fax: 0117-946 6553.



The Orpheus Centre will be running six-day and three-day residential, and one-day sampler courses for people to learn about music theatre, drama, song writing, dance and more. Running throughout 1999, they often end with public concerts. For a 1999 brochure and booking details write to the Administrator, The Orpheus Centre, North Park Lane, Godstone, Surrey RH9 8ND.



The Greater London Association of Disabled People (GLAD) has four dates in 1999 for its two-day training courses in disability equality. Run by disabled people, they include language and imagery, social barriers and discrimination and rights and legislation. Dates are 11-12 January, 5-6 April, 28-29 June and 6-7 September. Details from Brenda Ellis, GLAD, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, tel: 0171-346 5814, minicom: 0171-346 5811.



The Kids' Clubs Network holds The Childcare Revolution, 18-19 March, London. The conference will look at the National Childcare Strategy, how childcare partnerships will work and who will be eligible for the £220m New Opportunities Fund in April and how to apply. Sponsorship, exhibition and delegate bookings, tel: 0171-240 9393. Other information call the Network, tel: 0171-512 2112.

Video top five

1. **SCREAM 2** (Buena Vista): Smash hit sequel starring *Friends*' Courtney Cox.
2. **THE WEDDING SINGER** (E.V.): 80s-set comedy – squirm as the memories return.
3. **DEEP IMPACT** (CIC): Predictable “asteroid hits Earth” drama saved by its special effects.
4. **BREAKDOWN** (Fox Pathé): Kurt Russell loses his wife after breaking down in the desert.
5. **US MARSHALS** (Warner): Tommy Lee Jones in *The Fugitive* sequel.

Chart supplied by MIRB.

Closed captions video.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- ACROSS: 1. Minicom 5. Exit 7. Shellfish 8. Agog 9. Enlarge 11. Yen 12. Even 14. Assistant 16. Payphone 17. Drawl 18. Stalker
- DOWN: 1. Mystery 2. Needless 3. Celery 4. Maiden 5. Exhale 6. Tangentially 10. Gemstone 13. Waved 14. Adapt 15. Sepal

INDEPENDENT LIVING SHOW DATES 1999

IF YOU

Need to find solutions to independence

Want to compare and test before you buy

Bristol, Glasgow & London

Want to see all the market leading products

Want a great day out

Don't miss this great event, with free seminars and lots to see and do.



BRISTOL
March 24th-25th Whitchurch Sports Centre

GLASGOW
April 28th-29th SECC

LONDON
September 15th-16th Wembley



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or call the ticket hotline

01275 836465

Name _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ **DN**

A new way of buying a secondhand converted vehicle

-Simpler by choice

DATA SHEET Ford Courier Kombi

FOR CUSTOMER APPRAISAL

The Brotherwood Kombi is based on the 1.8 diesel or petrol Ford Courier Kombi with the addition of factory fitted windows.

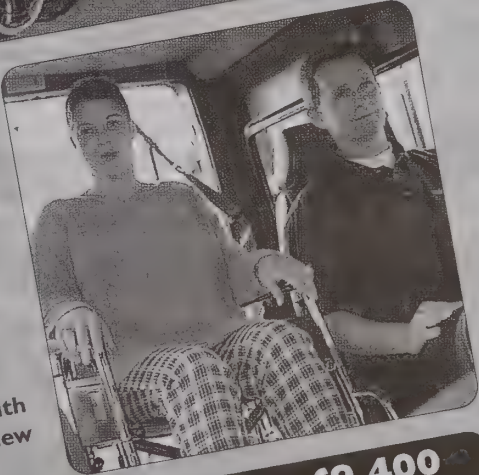
It is designed to carry a maximum of four persons (including the driver) plus one other seated in a wheelchair. It's 59" entry height and internal headroom make it accessible for most.

As with all Brotherwood converted vehicles, access is made via the rear by way of a counter-balanced ramp onto a lowered floor section. The wheelchair bound passenger is situated in the centre of the vehicle between rear "escort/carer" seats.

Vision is not impaired through the front of the vehicle with the addition of a "Forward Vision Panel" allowing the wheelchair bound passenger the same line of vision as the rest of the family group.

Available approximately four weeks from point of order, these vehicles undergo a full refurbishment programme once they arrive back at our factory. They all receive a full service and all restraint systems are carefully checked and renewed for maximum safety once inside the vehicle.

This second-hand example is a 1.8 diesel with power steering, and is fully serviced with new MOT. One owner, 15,000 miles only.



Offered at £9,400

All grade 'A' vehicles receive full factory refurbishment, a major service and new MOT. Bodywork receives detailed attention. New restraint system. Interior is refurbished or totally redecorated and comprehensive valeting. Grade 'A' cars are sold with 3 months parts and labour warranty.

- (N) 1995 VW Caravelle 1.9D CL, blue
- 5 Nissan Vanette Cargo 2.3D tail-lift
- Nissan Serena 2.0D, Gunmetal grey
- (J) 1990 Nissan Prairie MkII 2.0 SLX
- one grey, raised roof 59" headroom
- Blue (M) 1994 Nissan Serena 1.6LX
- Blue (N) 1995 Nissan Serena 1.6LX
- 1991 Nissan Prairie MkII 2.0 SLX
- grey, raised roof 59" headroom

All grade 'B' vehicles are fully inspected in our workshops. The paintwork has been tidied. They receive a full service and new MOT. A new restraint system is fitted and the interior is refurbished, valeted thoroughly and sold with a 3 months parts & labour warranty.

(J) 1992 Fiat Fiorino

(E) 1987 Nissan Prairie MkI

standard roof 54" headroom

1988 Nissan Prairie MkI SGL

standard roof 54" headroom

(J) 1988 Nissan Prairie MkI

raised roof 59" headroom

1987 Nissan Prairie MkI SGL

raised roof 59" headroom

1995 Vauxhall Combo 1.4

(J) Nissan Prairie MkII LX

raised roof 59" headroom

Nissan Prairie MkII SLX

standard roof 54" headroom

Nissan Prairie MkII SLX

standard roof 59" headroom

Nissan Prairie MkII SLX

headroom, Automatic

Nissan Prairie MkII LX

standard roof 54" headroom

(P) 1996 VW Caravelle, tail-lift

(L) 1994 Nissan Prairie MkII LX raised roof 59" headroom, Automatic

(R) 1997 VW Sharan Carat, raised roof 59" headroom

Ring 01935 872603 for list of secondhand conversions

New cars supplied fully converted • Customer after sales support and
buy-back service • Short & long term Hire or Contract Lease

Pillar Box Lane, Beer Hackett, Sherborne, Dorset. DT9 6QP
Telephone: 01935 872603 • Fax: 01935 872853



BROTHERWOOD
AUTOMOBILITY LIMITED



Recruitment (also on page 38)

People often imagine that working for the Inland Revenue is all about numbers, which is a pity, especially for people who like working with people in a friendly and progressive team where dealing with customers is a central feature of the role. At the Inland Revenue, people count.

Revenue Assistants

Location: Central Manchester

Starting Salary: £7,675 per annum

Working as part of a team, you will utilise your skills to contribute to the smooth running of our local office. Your duties will include keeping records, sorting and filing, handling mail and VDU input.

To us you're more than just a number

You will often be the first person in our organisation to talk to customers on the telephone or in person, so you will play an important part in ensuring people see us as friendly, helpful and efficient. You may be required to exercise discretion in the handling of taxpayers' affairs.

To join us, you don't have to worry about formal qualifications. Telephone calls cannot be accepted. Our competence based recruitment puts the emphasis on your personal skills with four key areas or competences to be met - written communications, managing time and self, group team working and analytical skills.

Show us you have the enthusiasm and ability to learn and we will offer you the training you need to build your confidence and performance, in a changing and progressive organisation that is committed to Equal Opportunities. The Inland Revenue operate a retirement age of 60.

Benefits Include:

- Pension Scheme • Flexible Working Hours • 22 days Annual Leave increasing to 25 days after 1 year • 10 1/2 days Public and Privilege Holidays

These are permanent appointments and shortlisted candidates will be assessed by test and interview.

For further information and an application form, please call into the local Job Centre. Telephone calls cannot be accepted. Closing date for completed applications is Monday 28th December 1998.

The changing
face of the
Inland Revenue



The Inland Revenue is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Committed to Equal Opportunities Policies and welcomes applications from individuals who possess the skills required, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation, marital status, religion or disability.

For sale

Is scooter storage a problem?

Looking for an affordable weather proof storage for your scooter - contact Comfort Aids for information on our scooter hut. Telephone Hayley or Kelly on 0115-911 0322

HOISTS

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wheelchairs,
scooters and
people into
cars...

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Children with Special Needs

We Design And Build Any
Cot or Bed You Need.

New Products Extra Strong Playpens.
Extra Large Stairgates.
Fitted Padded Play Areas.
High Quality Fair prices
Information Phone 01993 842885

1996 "P" Ford Transit, 2.5 TD auto.

Converted by Universal Mobility with a Ricon S series personal use wheelchair lift. Also fitted with an electric clamp. Features on this vehicle include pas, c/l, e/w, fsh, airbag, alloys, metallic paint. 27k miles. In excellent all round condition. £15,995.

Ian J. Jarvis Ltd, tel: (01703) 632721.

Renault Extra

Factory conversion to carry wheelchair, in red, only 34,000 miles, high roof, side windows, ramps and clamps. £3,995.
Crossley Hall Car Centre.

Tel: (01274) 495047

STAIRLIFTS

Reconditioned stairlifts
fitted from £850.
Guaranteed.

For details call 01323 508 006



Phab

Physically Disabled - Able Bodied

Under its National Lottery grant, Phab seeks to appoint 6 Community Development Workers in the following areas (1 per area). Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, Tyne & Wear, North Yorkshire

and South and East Yorkshire.

The posts will be home based.

Hours: 21 per week. Salary: £9,000 pa plus expenses.

Please write for an application form and job description to: Director of Operations, Phab, Summit House, Wandle Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1DF.

Closing date for applications: 17 January 1999.

Registered Charity No. 283931.

Phab is an equal opportunities employer.



WANTED: AFRICAN AND ASIAN DISABLED ARTISTS

East Midlands Shape is looking for disabled artists of African, Caribbean, Asian and other ethnic minorities to:

- increase their representation on board of management
- become involved in arts taster sessions in order to inspire others with the potential arts has for disabled people
- help develop future projects

So if this is YOU and you live or can work in Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire or Northamptonshire, please contact Sonali Shah, researcher for Disability and Cultural Diversity, at:

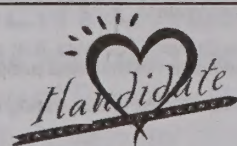
East Midlands Shape, 32 Park Row, Nottingham NG1 6GR. Tel: 0115-924 1700, Fax: 0115-955 0609, Minicom: 0115-958 7331, E-mail: arts@emshape.demon.co.uk



Personal

HEARING AID

The Samaritans
0345 90 90 90



New era, new logo, 50 weddings on

Your ideal man might be here

A specialist introduction agency for people with disabilities. It also welcomes able-bodied people.

phone/fax
01473 226950

FREEPOST, Handidate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2BR.

E-mail: Conrad_Packwood@compuserve.com
A member of ABIA



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Anybody - Any Age - Anywhere
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Choose Your Own Ideal Relationship

MUTUAL ESSENTIAL LINKS

1 Weir Street, Northwich,
Cheshire CW9 5HL
Tel/Fax: (24 hrs) UK 01606 49093
Overseas +44 + 1606 49093

To advertise your vacancies or courses please contact the Advertising Manager, Richard Gresham at Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, or tel: 0171-619 7336, fax: 0171-619 7331, minicom: 0171-619 7332.

GREATER
MANCHESTER

coalition of disabled people

THE DISABILITY ACTION TRAINING PROJECT
is recruiting for the following staff

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Scale 6 £16,233 35 hours per week

With knowledge/experience of training provision, good negotiation and communication skills (performed through sign language interpreters or with communications equipment where necessary).

ADMINISTRATIVE WORKER

Scale 4 £12,537 35 hours per week

To provide general administrative support to the project, Project Co-ordinator and trainers.

Requests by phone will not be accepted, please send for information, stating if Braille, tape or large print is required, to: GMCDP, Carisbrooke, Wenlock Way, Gorton, Manchester M12 5LF.

Closing date for application is 4pm, 22 January 1999.
Interviews week commencing 15 February 1999.

PLEASE do not send a CV.
ONLY DISABLED PEOPLE NEED APPLY.

These posts are funded by the NLCB for 3 years.



DisabilityNOW

Charity No. 280231

Marketing Executive

£18,350 - £20,709 (incl. ILW)

The UK's leading disability newspaper needs an enthusiastic, flexible all-rounder capable of promoting DN through reader incentives, advertising and exhibitions.

You must have two years marketing and promotion experience, be IT literate and have good disability awareness.

Disabled applicants welcome. For an application form (no CVs), contact Saira Khan, DN, Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, tel: 0171-619 7319, fax: 0171-619 7331.

Closing date: 22 January 1999

Courses

IDEAL TRAINING

Are you interested in:

- Increasing your employment opportunities
- Disability equality training?
- Equal opportunities issues?
- An opportunity to acquire a training qualification?
- Learning together with other disabled people to challenge negative attitudes?

If you answered "YES" to any of the above, then the IDEAL "Training the Trainers" course could be for you.

IDEAL Training, a disabled people's organisation funded by the National Lottery Charities Board will be running training courses for disabled people to enable them to gain a recognised training qualification and knowledge about disability issues. The training will start at the end of March 1999.

If you would like further information and/or an application pack, please contact us at:

IDEAL Training, Norton Park Centre, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY.
Tel: 0131-475 2340, Fax: 0131-475 2392, Minicom: 0131-475 2540,
E-mail: idealtraining@cablenet.co.uk

IDEAL Training: challenging attitudes, changing practice

Also on page 36

CJA**RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS GROUP**

2 London Wall Buildings, London Wall, London EC2M 5UX
Tel: 0171-588 3588 or 0171-588 3576
Fax: 0171-256 8501 E mail: cjagroup@online.rednet.co.uk

Opportunity for experienced residential care managers to develop a commitment for facilitating performing arts with disabled people

**CENTRE DIRECTOR****GODSTONE, SURREY****£28,000 - £35,000 p.a.****THE ORPHEUS CENTRE IS A CHARITABLE RESIDENTIAL PERFORMING ARTS ORGANISATION**

We invite applications from individuals who must have had at least three years' experience of residential care at a senior management level including managing staff in a start-up situation or in a period of organisational change. An understanding and warmth towards performing arts and disability will be key. Reporting to the Management Board you will be responsible for the effective direction and running of the Centre which offers daily and weekly courses for young people with physical and/or sensory impairment as well as one to three year fully residential apprenticeships for young disabled students. This responsibility will include establishing and running systems for financial, human resources and health and safety aspects, developing budgeting management and monitoring systems as well as identifying areas and strategies for income generation. Essential qualities are a blend of a strong financial and commercial approach with an empathy towards the charity's aims and aspirations in the development of everyone at the centre. Our client, an equal opportunities employer, welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. **Applications in strict confidence under reference CD8108/DN to the Managing Director, CJA.**

Hampshire Coalition of Disabled People and the Deaf Users Group

require a full-time person 37 hours per week

DEAF DEVELOPMENT WORKER**Salary circa £15,500 - £16,500 pa**

The ideal applicant will be someone with direct personal experience of deaf issues and identifies with deaf culture. A wide range of skills or experience are required and include:

- Fluency in BSL (Stage 3 CACDP equivalent)
- Good communicator
- Knowledge of disability issues and relevant legislation
- Ability to use appropriate technology
- Presentation skills

We require a person who is enthusiastic, energetic and with a commitment to further developing the project. The contract will end in May 2000 and is funded by a National Lottery Charities Board grant.

Closing date 27th January 1999.

Contact: Focus Office, 10b Dragoon House, Hussar Court, Westside View, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO7 7SG. Fax: (01705) 716154.

Holton Lee requires a Land Manager (c. £12k). A short stay residential centre for disabled people and carers set in 350 acres of heathland, woodland, reedbeds, situated between Poole and Wareham in Dorset, overlooking Poole Harbour.

Holton Lee seek a land manager to develop Holton Lee to its full conservation potential, to maximise the scientific base of the conservation and waste management research work and aims of Holton Lee. The successful applicant will require the skills to: warden nature reserve and maximise accessibility; work with volunteers/disabled people; develop waste management practise; and develop funding opportunities and PR. They must also have a relevant degree or HND, be highly motivated and work with minimum supervision.

For job description/person specification send an A4/A5 SAE (39p) to: Director, Holton Lee, East Holton, Holton Heath, Poole, Dorset BH16 6JN.

Apply by covering letter and cv by 8 January 1999. Interviews in the week 25 January 1999.

Holton Lee welcomes applications from disabled people.

The project has been funded by ARC Environment Fund - one of the largest set up under the landfill tax credit scheme. Website: <http://www.lids.co.uk/holtonlee>

Grants**Improvised Music Touring Scheme 1999/2000**

- Once again, the Arts Council is offering a limited amount of money for the support of tours by improvised music groups. This support will be available to groups playing mainly improvised music, i.e. music mostly without any pre-determined harmonic or rhythmic structures. With the help of the 1998/99 scheme, 10 improvising groups were supported, sums ranging from £750 to £2985.
- The projects should fall between May 1999 and March 2000.
- For an application form, please send an A4 stamped, self-addressed envelope marked 'IMP' to: Rajan Hooper, Music Department, Arts Council of England, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ.
- Closing date: Thursday 4 March 1999. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

The Arts Council has an equal opportunities policy and warmly welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF ENGLAND**LIVE!****Co-ordinator****£16,770 per annum****Fixed term, three year appointment***

LIVE! is an independent youth organisation that both provides and co-ordinates youth services for young people regardless of ability or disability, in the Chester area. LIVE! is run by a voluntary management committee which includes service users, parents, carers and staff members.

The tasks

1. To bring together and develop services in partnership with users, parents, carers, statutory and voluntary agencies for LIVE! members.
2. To assist the management committee to develop policies and procedures tailored to the needs of LIVE!

The person

1. We are looking for a self-motivated person with good awareness about the issues surrounding young people and disability.
2. A relevant qualification, eg in youth work, social work or teaching, or at least three years full-time relevant experience.

*We have obtained Lottery funding for this post for three years, but funding for years two and three are dependent on progress towards achieving the aims identified in the bid.

Application form from New Scene Youth Centre, Newton Lane, Chester CH2 2HH, or tel Marion on (01244) 671020. Closing date Monday 4 January.

LIVE! is working towards being an equal opportunities employer.

**The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

The national charity for everyone affected by MS - working for better care and the eradication of MS.

Welfare Grants Officer

Starting salary **£20,062**
(pay award pending)

We are looking for an experienced grants officer to help manage the welfare grants work carried out within the MS Society's HQ. Much of our work involves close collaboration with our network of 372 branches, which provide the main source of financial help to individuals.

The post holder will have a key role in enabling people with MS to access the financial assistance provided by the Society. A good understanding of statutory provision, social policy and welfare rights issues is essential. Experience of working within the voluntary sector and/or in an advisory capacity with individuals is also desirable.

For further information please write to: Joanna Ridley, Manager of Welfare Support, MS Society, 25 Effie Road, Fulham, London SW6 1EE.

Closing date for applications is: 20 January 1999.
Proposed interview date is: 29 January 1999.

The MS Society is working to become an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from disabled people.

Registered Charity 207495



Celfyddydau

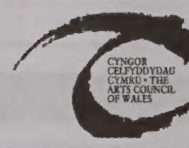
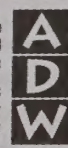
Anabledd

Cymru

Arts

Disability

Wales



Arts Disability Wales (ADW) is the leading organisation in Wales that works to promote equality in the arts for disabled people. As a direct result of a successful application to the European Social Fund ADW can now improve its capacity to deliver its information and advice service by creating two exciting new posts for the organisation.

Post 1 - Information Officer

35 hours per week full-time - 2 year fixed term contract (subject to review)
Salary - £17,319 pa

This post involves database and website management, providing information to the public, statutory and voluntary sectors and some research.

Post 2 - Editor

21 hours per week - 2 year fixed term contract (subject to review)
Salary - £17,319 pa pro rata

This post involves producing a quarterly arts and disability magazine as well as reviewing performances and exhibitions around Wales.

The office is based in an accessible building, with working hours that are flexible, subject to negotiation. **These posts are only open to disabled people.**

Closing date is 6 January 1999 and the interviews will take place during the week starting 25 January 1999.

Application forms from:
Arts Disability Wales, Chapter, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1QE.
Tel/Minicom: (01222) 377885, Fax: (01222) 395211,
E-mail: arts.disability@enablis.co.uk

You can also request information about these posts in large print and on tape.

DO YOU WANT A JOB WHERE YOUR SKILLS, IDEAS AND INITIATIVES COUNT?

Reasonably flexible hours and training opportunities. Mature support worker required by Suffolk man with learning disability for assistance with outdoor work experience and various recreational pursuits.

Contact Box No. DN01RG, Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

Services**BODYTALK VALERIE IVES**

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Counsellor.

Do you have a physical disability or mental health problem?

Need someone to talk to?

Mobile counselling service and advice on disability equipment available.

Contact Val on (01827) 58257 for more information.

Alternatively, a postal service is available.

Write to me at The Column of Light Healing Centre, The Yews, 7 Victoria Road, Tamworth, Staffordshire B79 7HS.

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Deadlines for the February issue of Disability Now:**Booking deadline is 15 January****Copy deadline is 19 January**

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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

Saving Monet

After the celebrations of New Year, it's easy to feel flat. So let DN brighten your winter months. The Royal Academy of Arts, London, is hosting *Monet in the 20th Century*, sponsored by Ernst & Young, and we have five pairs of tickets, worth £18 a pair, to give away.

Monet must rank amongst the most popular of all artists, and this exhibition brings together the late work of this founder of Impressionism. Although widely appreciated, his use of colour may not be as he intended, as he had cataracts. Over 80 paintings, from both public and private collections

will be on view, including those of his world famous gardens in Giverny, views of London and Venice, finishing with a collection of his last and potentially greatest works, the lily paintings (*above*), including one never seen in public before.

All areas of the Academy are accessible. There are wheelchairs for visitors to borrow and there are disabled parking spaces, which have to be booked in advance.

The show runs from 23 January to 18 April, 9am-6pm (Sunday-Thursday) and 9am-10pm (Friday and Saturday).

Terms and conditions for entry to the Monet and lap table offers

- Closing date is Friday 29 January 1999.
- Entrants must be 18 years of age or over
- No proof of purchase required
- UK entrants only
- No cash alternatives can be substituted for any special offer
- Winners must agree to the terms and conditions of any special offer
- Winners notified by post
- DN reserves the right to use winners for future publicity
- List of winners available on request. Send SAE.
- Editor's decision is final. No communication will be entered into.
- Special offers not open to DN staff or associates*

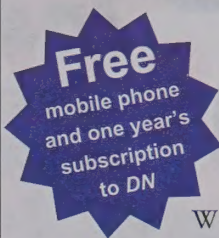
Send your name and address on a postcard marked **Monet or lap table**, to: *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

*Mobile phone offer is available to DN staff and associates

Please note

All entrants for the mobile phone offer must read the details (*right*) and contact The Communications Warehouse by phone or through their website to take up the offer.

Calling DN



Would you like a Free mobile phone package worth over £200 and calls as low as 1p a minute on the Cellnet Network?

The Communications Warehouse is offering *Disability Now* readers this fantastic offer; a free state of the art Ericsson GA628 or Panasonic G450 mobile phone and a host of free accessories in a package worth over £200.

That's not all. Every reader who takes up this offer will receive one year's free subscription to *Disability Now*, thanks to The Communications Warehouse.

- You will get absolutely free:
- Free Ericsson GA628 or Panasonic G450 mobile phone
 - Free connection to the Cellnet Network (normally £35)
 - Free inclusive calls
 - Free rapid charger
 - Free carry case



- Free in-car charger
- Free "personal" hands-free kit (not available with the Panasonic G450)
- Free in-car holder
- Free £20 accessory voucher
- Free nationwide 48hr delivery

For your free phone package call The Communications Warehouse, tel: 0870-730 7332 (quote *Disability Now* as a reference), or visit their website at: www.4free.co.uk/disabilitynow

Choice of tariffs on the Cellnet Network, starting from as £17.50 per month. This includes VAT and £5 worth of calls. All contracts benefit from Cellnet's First for Fairness discounts and calls can be as low as 1p per minute.

Important Note: Line connection is free only if you pay by credit card or direct debit. Minimum contract length is 30 days and payments are due monthly. Phone, original battery and mains charger must be returned in their box with other accessories upon termination of contract. Bill itemisation is mandatory and charged at £1.99 plus VAT per month. Terms and conditions: this offer is subject to availability and status. It is open to everyone in the UK who is over 18 and is subject to Cellnet airtime agreement.

What's in DN next month?



HOLIDAYS SPECIAL (2)

Where to go in Europe.

RELATIONSHIPS

Loves found and lost.

FOOTWEAR

Shoes that really help.

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Are you safe?

Plus the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 30 January 1999.

You can see a selection on our website at: <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

NEWSAGENT ORDER FORM

(Please complete and take to your newsagent)

Please reserve me a regular copy of *Disability Now* until further notice ☐

Please deliver a copy of *Disability Now* to my home address ☐

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Address: _____

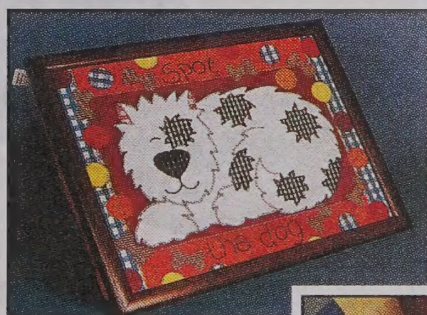
Postcode: _____

Signature: _____

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Tel: +44 (0)1483 211222, fax: +44 (0)1483 224541.



Lap dogs and cats



Two of the six brightly coloured lap tables DN has to give away: (*left*) "Spot the dog", (*below*) "Crazy cats"



Thanks to Gate Gallery, we have six of their designer collection lap tables to give away.

Worth up to £19, they are ideal for tv dinners, letter writing, homework and hobbies, and the wonderfully colourful tables come in a variety of designs to suit all tastes (two are shown above). They measure 17in by 13in and have non-slip mats that can be placed over the picture but are transparent enough to let you see the illustration through it.

Those not fortunate enough to win can still order from Bantalls department stores (tel: 0181-546 1001), Queen Elizabeth Foundation Trading (tel: [01372] 843616), Wyevalle garden centres (tel: 0800-413 213) and Allders department stores (tel: 0181-256 7700). Call to find your nearest retailer.

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For further information or to arrange a demonstration please contact Phil Beecham or Mike Jones

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inside -
page 39

£1.60 January 1999

Disability NOW

The award winning newspaper for everyone with an interest in disability

Physio demand

Over 90 per cent of respondents to a DN survey want regular physiotherapy for adults on the NHS. See p1.

Met's our belle: Mel C, alias Sporty Spice, has become a patron of Disability Sport England (DSE). She met wheelchair athlete Peter Hull and swimmer Duncan Goodhew at a DSE party. See page 5



KEY PRIO

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